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THE POLICE ROLE IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS

W. H. PARKER

W. H. Parker is well known for his progressive administration as Chief of Police, Los Angeles, California, and for his outspoken advocacy of effective law enforcement. The subject of this article was originally presented at a Police-Community Relations Institute held at Michigan State University under the auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and subsequently Chief Parker spoke on this same subject before the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Because of the numerous complimentary reports on these talks, Chief Parker was asked to prepare this paper for publication.—EDITOR.

At this moment a group of our scientists are devising what they call "an improved nuclear device." We do not know its range of total destruction or its date of completion. But this much is known—the power of this new weapon is such that its designers live in dread and apprehension of the forces it will unleash. And across the seas, other scientists, using other languages, race to surpass our weapons. The power of total destruction may lie within our immediate future. Each second which passes brings man nearer the moment of awesome and irrevocable decision.

As this moment of supreme crisis draws near, we find leaders in our communities devoting increasing attention to community relations—the inter-group conflicts within our cities. It is only right to ask whether that subject is rendered meaningless by the uncertain future; whether such a simple day-to-day matter, is really very important.

In answering this question, we approach the true import and significance of community relations. The small problems, the seemingly petty issues which make up that subject, are in reality neither small nor petty. That subject is *not* overshadowed by the great international disputes and their deadly consequences. *Rather, the reverse is true.* The great crisis which compels our attention was born in inequities, blind passions, and senseless conflicts at the community level. Conflict begins not between nations or blocks of nations, but between men. If there is an absolute and enduring solution to conflict, it will not be found by ministers of state as they propound their compromises. It will be found at the everyday level of social intercourse—in our homes, on our streets, and in our individual consciences.

The initial premise, then, is that community relations is not an unrealistic and relatively unimportant concern, but a vital issue—a question of human weakness and society's failure to control that weakness.

You will note that the premise does not contemplate the correction of human weakness. If society equity and tranquility were dependent upon perfection of the species, then despair might well keynote this study. *We have not solved the human equation.* Fortunately, there exists an alternative solution. Lacking the ability to remedy human imperfection, we must learn to live with it. The only way to safely live with it is to control it. *Control*, not *correction*, is the key.

When one man assaults another, or one group violently flaunts the rights of another group, the immediate and pressing issue is the conflict. We have not yet learned to control what men believe, but we can control what men do. Someday we may work more final solutions—in the interim, and it may be a long interim, we must have order.

The second premise then is that social order is the first concern of those interested in improved community relations. It provides, not a perfectly equitable pattern of life, but at least a peaceful arena in which those inequities can ultimately be solved. Community order works another advantage which may have never been properly assessed. Man is a creature of habit, not of hate. Order, even though it is *enforced order*—non-violent conduct, despite intolerant and discriminatory beliefs—creates among the peoples of the community habitual patterns of conduct. This habit of order, like any other habit, can be so ingrained into the human mind that it will displace baser modes of conduct.

It should be made abundantly clear at this point that the establishment of this degree of order does not necessitate a police state. Social order does not require more laws or tighter restrictions on human liberty. It does not require broadened police powers. Order can be achieved within the framework of existing police power and responsibility, professionally and effectively discharged.

Our laws are far from perfect, but even so they are sufficient for the maintenance of human intercourse without violent conflict. That these laws have not prevented violence is not the fault of the laws, but of the manner in which they are construed and enforced. The purpose of this paper is to outline a realistic and immediately practical program for securing and maintaining social order within the limits of existing legislation.

Some will question the confinement of the discussion to the bare limits of legal propriety. What of freedom of economic opportunity? What of effective desegregation in business and professions, as well as in schools? What of the multitude of "gentlemen's agreements," the harmful, though not actually illegal actions, which relegate some groups to second-class citizenship? Are these not also important questions, some of them as damaging and painful as actual physical violence? The answer must be in the affirmative. But these evils will never be eliminated, so long as *conflict* keeps alive the beliefs that created them. In the ruins of mob action, in the pain of physical assault, and in the renewed and intensified hates and fears which follow violence—there are no solutions. Conflict does not beget peace. But where people can walk together and live together and do business together without violence, an affirmative step has been taken.

Under our system of government, any discussion of enforced order is necessarily a discussion of local police agencies. We have no national police; legislative and judicial branches of government are prohibited from usurping police powers; our armed forces can be used civilly only under the gravest and most extraordinary emergencies. Our rich and complex economic system, our political freedom, the very conduct of our way of life, is made possible because of the security provided by local police agencies. The entire social structure is balanced upon patterns of order created by community law enforcement.

This is quite a balancing act. Historically, it is a rare concept; few nations have rested so much on so slender a foundation. Recognizing this, it would appear that excellence of the police would be a principal and constant concern of community leaders. Their selection, their training, their morale would seem to be of critical importance. Understanding all this, certainly our leaders should have provided the police with the finest young men, the most capable leaders, the wisest counsel. That we have not done these things is as obvious as it is regrettable. The disorder and violence which troubles us from time to time is part of the price we pay for our neglect.

There is in existence today, a city which has successfully applied the principle of enforced order to the problem of community relations. That city, Los Angeles, is characterized by a quality of inter-group cooperation which renders it almost unique among our great metropolitan centers. It is not a model community. It has intolerant citizens; it has incidents of conflict. But those factors have not been permitted to accumulate into mass disorder. *Los Angeles has not experienced an instance of organized group-violence in the past twelve years.*

The purpose here is not to praise that city; rather, to study it as an experiment in enforced order which may point the way to other communities. If organized violence occurred anywhere, it should, by all socio-economic standards, have been in Los Angeles. In the last decade, it has nearly doubled in size; it suffered the intense dislocation of adjustment to an industrial economy; it has been and still is the focus of one of the greatest migrations in this nation's history. Its two million, two hundred-thousand people, the hub of a metropolitan area of five million, is a melting pot of races, colors, creeds, and ideas.

Some examples: Los Angeles is the home of nearly one-quarter million Negroes, an increase of 168% since World War II. It has the largest Mexican-descent population outside of Mexico City. It has the largest Japanese group in the nation; the third largest Chinese group. The number of persons of the Jewish faith at least equals the urban average. The city is a cross section of the races, colors, and creeds which make up our nation. And, for some obscure reason, it is somehow a Mecca not only for strange religious cults, but every brand of zealot, bigot, and fanatic our society breeds.

The story of that city's freedom from strife is largely the story of the professionalization of its order enforcing agency—the police department. In no way does this fact discount the efforts of other agencies, particularly those working for community and group betterment. Their progress in the fields of human understanding, education, and welfare has been remarkable. It holds great promise for the future. But the principle contribution of these agencies to immediate order was their dynamic and unflagging support to police improvement.

Not long ago, a feature writer from another city's metropolitan newspaper visited Los Angeles. His task—analyze the Los Angeles Police Department, study its techniques and procedures, and take the story back home. The purpose: improvement of that other city's police agency. The purpose reflects good journalism, the type which justifies faith in the Fourth Estate. Unfortunately, the purpose of such studies is seldom achieved. Since Los Angeles has achieved its eminence in law enforcement dozens of citizen groups, city officials, and journalists have studied its police methods.

The usual result is a storm of bitter criticism of their department, and a demand that their police adopt Los Angeles' professionalism.

How simple that sounds. And how dangerous it is to assume that a city's so-called police problem stems from the police themselves. These people who demand that their police be more efficient, more honest, more impartial, need exercise in realism. Who actually runs a police department? The Mayor, the police commission, the chief? The people do! They set its policies, establish its standards, furnish its manpower, and supply its budget. A police department is not a private endeavor; it has no funds of its own. It is not a legal entity; it has no rights, no vested interests. It is merely a group of citizens employed to exercise certain functions. It is created by the public, shaped by the public, and operated by the public. *And if it operates badly, the responsibility cannot be disowned by the public.*

We often hear the complaint that the police organization is all right, but the officers just are not producing. And if an employee isn't producing—whose fault is it? The public selected that man—did they select the wrong man? The public furnished the training—was it bad training—or did they neglect to provide funds for training of any sort? What about the supervisors and commanders? Were they selected by competitive examination on a merit basis—or were they promoted on a political basis? If so, whose politics? If there is a machine in town—a few police votes do not keep it running. *But the public vote does!*

A recent news report tells of widespread police graft in a Southern City. Officers are "squeezing" merchandise from businessmen, parking fees from truckers, gratuities from other citizens. The good citizens there, horrified at the exposé, might do well to accept some personal responsibility. The basic salary of their police officer is two-hundred twenty dollars per month. On the six-day week, that runs about a dollar per hour. Carpenter's helpers in the same town earn double that scale. What kind of policemen do they expect to get for a dollar an hour? Their police department costs less than a million dollars per year. The crime bill, the disorder, the under-the-table pays-offs run fifteen million dollars per year. A shrewd bargain these good citizens have driven. Of course, they are going to solve their problem. They are replacing the Chief, the seventh in six years.

The city that calls upon Los Angeles for assistance usually wants to study its police organization, inspect the Planning and Research and Intelligence Divisions, the strong disciplinary program, observe the cadet school, the continuous in-service training. Is it possible they are beginning their study at the wrong level? Los Angeles methods are merely adaptations of sound administrative technique. They are available and understandable to qualified police officials everywhere. But they cannot be put into effect until competent personnel are attracted by decent job benefits, until an adequate operating budget is furnished; until public cooperation replaces disinterest, shallow-interest, and special-interest. Professional police work will come into being only when the public takes a long hard look at their police, and instead of disowning what they themselves have created, accept full responsibility for the errors of generations.

Returning, then, to the Los Angeles experiment—the thing which made police progress and social order there a reality was a public acceptance of these very basic

facts. At first, it was understood by only a small group of community leaders. The job of selling this concept was a difficult one. Not that it was a particularly new concept—but at some community levels it is an ugly one. Los Angeles had a small, vocal but prominent group of citizens selling the advantages of professional law enforcement. If they had not sold that product, created a market for it, the experiment in enforced order would have failed.

Assuming a community is ready to support the professionalism of its police agency, there are certain techniques which the Los Angeles experiment has proved necessary. The first step is the attraction of proper recruits. Los Angeles policemen draw \$440.00 monthly at the end of three years' service.¹ This is probably a minimum figure. Below that, the possibility of attracting sufficiently educated and capable persons is almost nil. The base salary for an experienced line officer should be higher, in the neighborhood of \$600.00 monthly, at present living costs. The first city to adopt such a scale will attract high quality personnel who now select other professions.

There must be minimum recruiting standards—and these minimums must be held even though the Department operates below strength. Far better to have to increase unit output than to corrupt the police future with sub-standard men. In Los Angeles, less than 4% of all applicants meet the rigid police standards. The city has been considerably under authorized strength for five years; at one time it was ten percent under an allowed figure which was itself nearly forty percent under the recommended population, square mile ratio. The police managed to do the job only because personnel quality allowed the department to steadily improve efficiency. Administrative experts indicated the force might improve efficiency 2% per year with much planning and labor. Work output went up 15% in 1954, and the department is going to do even better in 1955.

Recruit selection must be made solely on a merit basis, preferably by an independent civil service department. If a ward boss, an alderman, or a councilman can influence selection in any manner, tear up the plans and start over. As a matter of fact, if a politician can interfere in any way other than through official channels, the police improvement plan is doomed. Categorically, professional police work and politics do not mix—and there are no shades of gray to that philosophy.

A psychiatric test must be included in the recruit selection program. This bears directly on the problem of community relations. The finest training, direction, and discipline cannot correct or control serious emotional defects.

The Los Angeles Police Training School has a thirteen week cadet course at present. Again, this should be considered a minimum and then only if the average recruit has an educational equivalent of two college years. The professional minimum would be nearer a six-month training period, plus a six-months' additional field probation under strict supervision. This should be followed up with in-service and advanced officers' schools, specialist and command schools. This is, of course, only a sketch of recruiting and training minimums. With it in mind, it is possible to consider in more detail some of the training which bears directly on the subject of community relations.

Once the police cadet has received basic technical information, the direction of training pivots to the consideration of human relations. The cadet must be taught to

¹ Effective July 1, 1956, the salary was increased to \$489 per month.

translate his technical background into solutions of field situations—problems which involve people.

In the Los Angeles courses, sociology is stressed more than ethnology. Applied human relations is stressed more than theoretical psychology. The purpose of the training is to provide immediately usable knowledge. Training schedules do not allow time for building the broad theoretical base necessary in university training. The police administrators should not attempt that impossible task under present training time minimums. The advantages of a college education requirement for police applicants is readily apparent here. Lacking this, upper-level courses are available at local colleges and officers should be encouraged to take advantage of these facilities. A recent survey indicated that forty percent of Los Angeles police personnel were engaged in such training.

The cadet learns that people differ—by race, religion, politics, economic status, occupations, and in a thousand other ways. He learns they have a *right* to be different. He learns that we are all minority group members—that each of us belongs to many groups any one of which can be, and often has been, discriminated against.

In other classes, diagrams of the composition of the city are studied. The various peoples are discussed, the movements of groups are traced, the tensions resulting from these movements are pin-pointed and analysed in detail. The racial composition of police districts is an important lesson here because it must be made clear that there are no “Jim Crow” areas, no “Ghettos.” Every area has everything found in all other areas, differing only in proportion. The aim here is to correct stereotyped impressions that the city is divided into clearly defined groups and that law enforcement differs accordingly. The Los Angeles Police Department’s policy of one class of citizenship, one standard of police action, becomes readily understandable.

Another class expands this policy. The officer now understands the composition of the community, he has learned how people differ. He is now taught that these variations cannot influence him in the discharge of his duties. His department handles the people involved in incidents *only* according to the degree of their involvement. There is no other measurement. Existing laws are enforced and nothing else. Los Angeles does not enforce beliefs or prejudices—including the officer’s. During his hours of duty, he is a composite of the entire community.

Typical course titles are *Police Sociological Problems*, *Human Relations*, *Ethics*, *Professionalism*, *Civil Disturbances*, and *Public Relations*. Course titles do not reveal the full scope of the 520-hour program. For example, although the *Human Relations* class lasts but two hours, that subject is a principal concern in courses such as *Interrogation*, *Patrol Tactics*, and *Investigation*. The firearms’ class gives more time to “when *not* to shoot” than it does to “How to shoot.” The entire training staff is constantly alert in the classroom, on the exercise field, and in the locker room to discover signs of disabling prejudice which might make the cadet a poor risk. Conditions of tension are artificially created so that the man’s reaction can be studied—and he may never know that the situation was contrived to test him.

At this point, let us consider the subject of racial and religious prejudice. The cadets, of course, reflect a broad cross section of society and bring to the department the intolerant attitudes to which they have previously been exposed. The question—what to do about these beliefs?

Recently, a chief of police from a mid-western city made an inspection tour of the Los Angeles Department. He was particularly interested in the extremely low percentage of citizen complaints received alleging prejudicial treatment of minority group members. He was also interested in case studies where so-called *minority group organizations* defended the Police Department against accusations of misconduct. One of these instances involved a Metropolitan Los Angeles daily newspaper which began a series of articles with the caption: "Cops Lay Heavy Hands on Minorities." Every newspaper occasionally carries such articles, and in many cases, they represent good journalism—accurate coverage. In this instance, the facts were patently incorrect. The writer, a new resident, was securing information from old newspaper clippings and from certain special-interest groups. He was committing the cardinal reportorial sin of not checking current facts. The article shook police morale and public confidence. Assuming the facts had been true, it offered no solutions other than a vague recommendation that the police ought to do something about this mess! Fortunately, certain community organizations recognized where the "mess" really was. A co-ordinating group representing sixty social service agencies contacted the publisher of that paper. He was told, and in no uncertain terms, that the story was untrue, that it was inciting lunatic fringe-elements into disorderly conduct, and was playing directly into the hands of subversive groups. The result—that particular series was discontinued and, to the credit of that publisher, a new series of articles underscoring police-public co-operation was instituted in its place.

The visiting chief of police was understandably impressed. In most jurisdictions the police fight lonely battles. He assumed that such overwhelming public support meant Los Angeles had somehow erased prejudicial and intolerant beliefs held by police officers. He was wrong. Those who work in the field of education recognize no group can accomplish this miracle. Of course, it is possible to reject an applicant whose intolerance is so high it is a disabling factor. Where it is not too deep-seated, it is possible to erase it, or at least diminish it. In the majority of cases, the police must learn to operate equitably despite it. This can be done only by controlling the results of such beliefs. With policemen, as with society in general, the immediate concern is not what the man thinks but what he does. Los Angeles Police policy recognizes only one class of citizenship—first class citizenship. Any incident of police action which deviates from this policy is met with swift and certain discipline.

A police department's community relations program must begin with training, and continue with a firm human relations policy and strong disciplinary machinery to enforce it. It is a departmental application of this article's second premise—that the immediate issue is conduct and the immediate solution is enforced order.

Those who question whether that degree of discipline is possible—consider the following example: A certain Los Angeles Police Officer who walks a foot beat in the old section of the city. The street is a racial melting pot. The officer is one of the "old school," recruited long before psychiatric examinations were instituted. If there is a maximum number of racial and religious prejudices, one mind can hold, he certainly represents it. This officer has been exposed to the complete range of police human relations training. He has memorized every maxim, every scientific fact, every theory relating to human equality. He knows all the accepted answers. He does not believe a word of it.

Understanding this, it is surprising the officer's eight-hour duty tour is characterized by tolerance, applied human relations, and equitable treatment of all persons. His superiors have watched his work closely, a little wary that his deep-seated convictions might win out over discipline in moments of stress. This has not happened during the five years he has patrolled this highly critical district. It can now safely be assumed his intolerance has become a victim of enforced order—*habit has won out over belief*.

Discipline, enforced compliance with police policy, is a key which is available to every police administrator. If it works in Los Angeles, it will work elsewhere. The entire community relations program is at stake with every officer in the field. It is here that the police department proves itself, or is found wanting.

The second-line community relations effort is handled by specialized police units. One of the most successful of these is the Department's Community Relations Detail working out of the Public Information Division. Its mission is to establish and maintain communications between police and the so-called minority press, serving them and the key individuals and groups in the human relations field. These officers hold membership in sixty organizations representing a cross section of specialized community interests. Few police details pierce so deeply into the stratifications of our complex society or maintain so many privileged sources of information.

Shortly after its organization, the Community Relations Detail was directed to work with the community press. Certain of these newspapers were parlaying instances of law enforcement against minority group members into sensational accounts of police prejudice and brutality. Many of these articles were written solely from the unsubstantiated account given by the arrestee. The accumulated result was the fomenting of an hysterical "cop-hating" attitude which rendered suspect every police action involving non-Caucasian persons.

The Community Relations officers went to these publishers and laid their cards on the table. Sensationalism was selling newspapers, but it was hurting the community. They pointed out that sensationalism was actually manufacturing new incidents—feeding upon itself. They offered, with the full backing of the Office of the Chief, to provide the publisher with exact and complete facts on every inquiry, whether the police action was right or wrong; whether the facts helped or hurt the Police Department.

The confidence the public has shown in the men who publish the nations' newspapers is justified. Community interest won out over self-interest.

The Community Relations Details is first, a public information activity, acquainting community groups with police policies, procedures, and problems. Where necessary, it interprets specific police actions, explaining how they were necessary and why they were taken. Secondly, the Detail transmits information in the other direction, keeping the police staff informed about minority and inter-group problems and activities. We have found the police are sometimes overly suspicious of a group's militant efforts, seeing in it a threat to order which does not actually exist. The two-way communication furnished by the Detail brings the facts to both sides. Thirdly, the Detail reports any police activities which are discriminatory, or may appear to the community to be discriminatory. The police staff does not operate under the assumption that it is infallible. Critical comment from this specialized unit often prevents

more dangerous and expensive criticism from the public at large. Lastly, the Detail operates as an advance listening post, alert for rumors which might prelude violent conflict. In a recent instance, these officers were informed that racial violence was brewing at a school. A quick investigation indicated the situation was critical. The Detail flashed the word to citizen groups organized to combat just such emergencies. Affected police field units were placed on a stand-by basis. The result—this Detail, working with citizen groups, contained the situation.

It is profitable to assign to these specialized units, officers belonging to minority groups. They are often more sensitive to the problem, have previously established contacts in those communities, and encounter fewer barriers. However, it must be emphasized that the officer's competency, not his ancestry, is the overriding consideration in making the assignment. Community relations details are not "window-dressing"—they are not publicity gags designed to display non-Caucasians in key position.

A similar detail works out of the Juvenile Division. In this case, the principal concern is with actual offenders. One of this unit's primary values is its detailed knowledge of gang members, leaders, and methods. They know their homes, their meeting places, their territories. They deal with what the law recognizes as children, but do not be mistaken—this is intelligence activity of the highest order. The disheartening message of our crime statistics is all too clear—today's delinquent is often a dangerous criminal—an immediate threat to community order. He is sometimes the innocent tool of intolerant adults, but he can also be a moving force behind community violence. The police are sympathetic with the ideals of juvenile correction—of rehabilitation over punishment. Here, as with other community problems, they invite welfare agencies to work to eliminate causes. Meanwhile, the public must remember that the police department is not a social agency. The police are bound to read the message in police records and employ protective tactics accordingly. In Los Angeles, as in other cities, there is a juvenile problem. The city does *not* have a problem in mass juvenile disorder, because it faces facts, and on the basis of these facts, employs units such as the ones described.

Three factors comprise the Los Angeles Police Department's community relations program: *Training* of officers—including training through discipline, *public information* activity, and *efficient line police work*. Unless they are all in existence *and inter-working*, a community relations program does not exist. Training provides a base, but public information and line officers must give the training staff that information which keys it to current needs. Public information is a useless activity unless it is backed by competent line officers who are enforcing the laws equitably. And the most dedicated line commanders can accomplish little unless training provides well-schooled personnel and public information creates a co-operative public.

Unfortunately, this is not a simple and revolutionary device, an easy way to an effective program. The program *does* hold promise that to a mutually co-operating public and police department, no problem in community order is beyond solution. The methods are known, they are proving themselves in Los Angeles—all that is needed is dedicated citizens who will put them into effect.

The Los Angeles experiment seems to justify the philosophy of enforced order as

the first step toward improved community relations. Progress of this type can be reported objectively, without seeming to seek praise, because law enforcement is absolutely dependent upon the public for any successes it may have. The credit for Los Angeles progress must go primarily to Los Angeles citizens.

The experiment is not concluded. Los Angeles does not represent the ultimate in community equity and tranquility. Certain factors now at work could bring all the progress crashing down into rubble and violence. Forthrightness and honesty requires some critical comment, perhaps touching upon activities and attitudes or organizations most active in seeking good community relations.

The first comment concerns minority discrimination against the public as a whole. Reaction to police deployment furnishes a good example of this danger. Every department worth its salt deploys field forces on the basis of crime experience. Deployment is often heaviest in so-called minority sections of the city. The reason is statistical—it is a fact that certain racial groups, at the present time, commit a disproportionate share of the total crime. One point must be made clear in that regard—a competent police administrator is fully aware of the multiple conditions which create this problem. There is no inherent physical or mental weakness in any racial stock which tends it toward crime. But—and this is a “but” which must be borne constantly in mind—*police field deployment is not social agency activity*. In deploying to suppress crime, the police are not interested in *why* a certain group tends toward crime, they are interested in maintaining order. The fact that the group would not be a crime problem under different socio-economic conditions and might not be a crime problem tomorrow, does not alter today’s tactical necessities. Police deployment is concerned with effect, not cause.

A common complaint is that intense police activity in a given area is psychologically disturbing to its residents. It is impossible to disagree. Such activity can add weight to discriminatory beliefs held by some who witness it, and it can create a sense of persecution among those who receive it. But is the police administrator, then to discard crime occurrence statistics and deploy his men on the basis of social inoffensiveness? This would be discrimination indeed!

Every citizen has the right to police protection on the basis of need. The police have the duty of providing that protection, and of employing whatever legal devices are necessary to accomplish it. At the present time, race, color, and creed are useful statistical and tactical devices. So are age groupings, sex, and employment. If persons of one occupation, for some reason, commit more theft than average, then increased police attention is given to persons of that occupation. Discrimination is not a factor there. If persons of Mexican, Negro, or Anglo-Saxon ancestry, for some reason, contribute heavily to other forms of crime, police deployment must take that into account. From an ethnological point-of-view, Negro, Mexican, and Anglo-Saxon are unscientific breakdowns; they are a fiction. From a police point-of-view, they are a useful fiction and should be used as long as they remain useful.

The demand that the police cease to consider race, color, and creed is an unrealistic demand. *Identification is a police tool, not a police attitude*. If traffic violations run heavily in favor of lavender colored automobiles, you may be certain, whatever the sociological reasons for that condition, the police would give lavender automobiles

more than average attention. And if those vehicles were predominantly found in one area of the city, police would give that area more than average surveillance. Any pressure brought to bear by the lavender automobile manufacturer's association would not alter that professional stand—it would only make the police job more difficult. *Such demands are a form of discrimination against the public as a whole.*

It is one thing for the police to employ group identification for statistical and descriptive purposes; it is quite another if it is employed to set a group apart from the rest of society. The question should be brought more into the open and discussed because it represents a conflict of opinion within the physically-identifiable minority groups. Some of these citizens object strenuously to being identified with their background. Sometimes the same citizen then publicly announces his ancestry by joining organizations with names bearing that stamp of identity. Either attitude can be supported by argument. But the man, or the group, which changes identification at different times and under different conditions, confuses and impedes the social assimilation process. There is no place for dual status in our society, and it is incongruous that the groups with the keenest interest in eliminating dual status should create conditions which perpetuate it. Organizations which publicly identify themselves with a certain racial group are keeping alive the phantasy that the group is different. By setting it apart from the whole, they help keep it apart. The country needs such organizations; they fill a vital role in our changing system. The police heartily endorse their good works. However, if a single class of citizenship is the key to social assimilation, then practices and titles which contradict it must be examined and resolved.

Another problem which plagues the police administrator is organized group pressure to promote officers and make command assignments on the basis of race, color, or creed. Before a recent Los Angeles election, the Police Department encountered tremendous pressure to replace an Anglo-Saxon commander of a detective division with another commander belonging to a certain minority group. It refused to engage in racial discrimination against the Anglo-Saxon commander. He was the most qualified man for the job and, as such, he retained the job. Neither does the Department consider ancestry a factor in making promotional appointments. The Los Angeles policy is to take the top man from the list. Racial background should not hinder advancement; neither should it help it. Only a few months ago a Lieutenant's badge was pinned on a young Los Angeles officer born in Mexico. He got that badge because he was the top man, not because accidents of conquest created a national border between Los Angeles and his place of birth.

No one is more critical of the American police service than the police themselves. Today's administrator does not hesitate to express that criticism and applauds others who have criticized constructively. Certainly, few other organizations in history have been so unanimously castigated. The police have no complaints to make—it is part of the painful process of growth and improvement. There is one danger inherent in this process—a point of group-masochism is reached where all other groups become wise and faultless and self-reproach becomes the total answer. The police must guard against this danger.

Discrimination is a two-way street. Those who are most active in combating it are

sometimes guilty of advocating that the police practice it. There is nothing shocking in this critical observation—no group is characterized by omniscience. The fact minorities have received intolerant and discriminatory treatment does not automatically lend justice to all of their demands. They are as prone to error as majority groups, and the wiser and calmer citizens within those groups recognize it. Thoughtful citizens expect the police to stand their ground when they believe they are right. They expect the police to criticize as well as be criticized.

There is a philosophy of citizenship which embodies the principles outlined in this article. Several years ago this writer was asked to express his ideal of citizenship in a single paragraph. It has served as a guide and personal challenge since that time:

“Good citizenship is expressed in many ways. It consists not only of bearing arms for one’s country, but also of bearing truth for it. It consists not only of facing physical enemies, but also of facing spiritual enemies: Intolerance, Bigotry, and Hate. It consists not only of holding high regimental banners, but also of holding high the banners of Duty, Faith, and Love. Although not all citizens can prove themselves on a battlefield, all can do it by the quiet and devoted living of the spirit of our country. It is sometimes more difficult to *live* ideals than to shed blood for them.”