

# Council Given Report on Police Changes

(Summary of City Manager's Comments Re Attorney General's Police Department Report)

The second report from the Attorney General's office regarding the Torrance Police Department was received March 3, 1964 by officials of the city. The report summarizes certain testimonies given to the Attorney General's office as a result of a request by the Torrance City Council to review police activities in the city.

The report makes several recommendations as to action the City Council and Administration might take in effectuating corrective changes. Following is a complete summary of those steps being undertaken by the office of the City Manager and appropriate department heads to implement the ten recommendations of the Attorney General's office.

(1) The present organization of the Torrance Police Department should be subjected to the analysis of experts in police administration. It is our information that such services are available through contract with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's office.

It is requested that the City Council implement their October 11, 1963 request regarding the invitation to Los Angeles County Sheriff Peter J. Pitchess to conduct a review of the Torrance Police Department operations and procedures. Today we spoke to Under-Sheriff James Downey, in Sheriff Pitchess' absence, and were advised that the invitation to the Sheriff is professionally acceptable and the Sheriff's office is standing by awaiting the Council's invitation to initiate their review of operations and procedures.

At this time, it remains only that the City Council imple-

ment their original request to Sheriff Pitchess' department. It is understood that a team of technical experts will work on individual phases of this review.

In the interim period the necessary background documents, i.e. budgets, organizational charts, manuals, annual reports, etc. have been forwarded to Sheriff Pitchess' office for review prior to the initiation of the city's request.

(2) Strong leadership in your Police Department is an immediate need. As stated above, an open competitive examination should give the appointment power a wide field of well qualified men from outside, as well as from inside, your department from which to select a competent chief.

On February 11, 1964, the Torrance City Council adopted an ordinance setting forth requirements and specifications

for the recruitment of a Police Chief. This ordinance becomes effective on March 11th. Under the provisions of this new ordinance it is the responsibility of the Council to conduct said examination. In order to implement the ordinance and recruit a new Chief of Police as expeditiously as possible, it is our recommendation that the examination for Chief of Police be ordered immediately from the State Cooperative Personnel Services. (Distribute letter).

I am sure you are well aware that this new ordinance provides for both an open and promotional competitive examination and will insure the city a wide selection of qualified men from outside, as well as inside, the Police Department.

It is the further intention of the office of the City Manager to hold an immediate examination to fill two additional Captain positions previously authorized by the City Council.

To this end a letter has been written by our office to the Civil Service Board requesting they accelerate the final specifications and job requirements for these positions. These two Captain positions will provide the additional high level leadership, supervision, and command listed as a deficiency in the Attorney General's report.

(3) The Chief of Police of your Department should be informed that he is to run the Torrance Police Department in the best interests of all citizens in the community and that no individual interest is to receive special consideration over that of the community.

Pending the appointment of a full time Chief of Police, Asst. Chief Porter, officers and men of the department are highly capable of implementing this recommendation of the Attorney General. There is no doubt in my mind that the de-

partment will be administered in the best interests of all the citizens in the community. We have personally reviewed the Police Department's code of ethics and are assured that the said code of ethics provides for such treatment.

(4) The Vice Division should be revamped with new leadership, personnel, expanded use of other personnel in undercover work, and use, when necessary, of outside agencies.

Immediate steps were taken to provide for a reorganization of the department's vice detail. Until this reorganization can be effected, vice detail responsibilities are currently under the command of Lt. Mickey Fischer under the supervision of the Assistant Chief of Police. In the interim period, pending this reorganization, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has promised their assistance, help and cooperation in the administration of vice detail operations. In addition to Lt. Fischer, other personnel changes were made to include expanded use of other personnel in undercover work and, when necessary, the above mentioned outside agencies.

A summary report will be filed with the City Council following a complete reorganization of the vice detail.

(5) To insure a strong and effective policy in dealing with improper conduct by members of the Police Department, the internal affairs section within the department should be reorganized and strengthened. Investigative assignments of this section should come from the Chief of Police at all times.

Pending the appointment of a new Chief of Police, the Assistant Chief of Police, Mervyn Porter, has undertaken to reorganize and strengthen the Internal Affairs Section within the department. All investigative assignments dealing with improper conduct by members of the Police Department shall be personally assigned by the Assistant Chief of Police. To assist the Assistant Chief in these matters it is our intention to utilize the services of other Internal Affairs operations currently being conducted by the Los Angeles Police Department, County Sheriff's Department, District Attorney's office and the State Attorney General's office.

(6) An efficient program should be instituted to maintain proper police operations in the department and to keep all officers posted as to new techniques, laws, and procedures.

Naturally the full implementation of this Attorney General's recommendation will require the day to day supervision of a full time Chief of Police. However, in the interim period, Assistant Chief Porter and his immediate subordinate officers are engaged in the implementation of this recommendation. Several days ago, at the request of the Police Department, the office of the City Manager authorized, from the International Police Chiefs Association, sufficient copies of KEY REPORTS to all mem-

bers of the Police Department. Key Reports are a summary of techniques, laws and procedures covering all phases of Police Department operation. They are an extremely valuable training tool in the training of personnel at all levels within the department. Serious consideration should also be given in the formulating of the forthcoming budget to the employment of a full time departmental training officer within the Police Department. The training officer would be in a staff capacity and functionally responsible to administer all phases of interdepartmental training necessary to effectuate this recommendation of the Attorney General.

(7) The manual of procedure should be revised immediately and provisions should be made for supplements to keep it current at all times. There should be enough copies so that every officer on the force has one.

While work on a new manual of procedure will be undertaken as rapidly as possible, such a manual requires a great deal of effort and time to compile. It is foreseen that a manual of procedure will be a priority of the new Chief of Police. However, in the interim period work is proceeding to gather the necessary background material, analysis of existing procedures, and other information which will expedite the compilation of a new manual.

It is foreseen that the compilation of a new manual of procedure is an excellent device to allow mass participation by all levels within the Police Department. Such cooperative efforts are bound to reap dividends that will result in more effective and efficient procedures.

In addition, a budget committee has been established within the Police Department to assist the Assistant Chief of Police in formulating 1964-65 budget estimates. It is felt that this committee will not only provide training for the department's Lieutenants but will also give greater insight into the fiscal needs of the entire department. It is further felt that this committee will add an element of esprit de corps and cooperation that was previously non-existent within the department.

(8) The system of handling physical evidence should be overhauled with the aim of protecting the custodial chain of that evidence, as well as providing an effective system of accountability for evidence that is being held at any one time or that of which disposition has been made.

On March 5, 1964, the Police Department instituted a new and revised evidence and property procedure. This review in evidence and property procedure has been under study by Torrance Police Department personnel for several weeks. The new procedure will correct this deficiency listed in the Attorney General's report regarding this matter. Very briefly, the new procedure provides an effective system of accountability for evidence that is being held. Sufficient storage area has been made avail-

able and responsibility for the placement and withdrawal of evidence has been centralized under one person. This new procedure, along with the centralizing of responsibility, was done with the sole purpose of protecting the custodial chain of property needed in the orderly prosecution of criminal cases. While I personally investigated the new procedure on an abrupt inspection Saturday morning, the officers of the Police Department are anxious for the Sheriff to conduct a review of this new procedure. We feel that the department's confidence in this new procedure will be substantiated by Sheriff Peter Pitchess.

(9) All city officials should deal with the Police Department through its regular chain of command. Direct requests of individual officers should be eliminated.

For the sake of brevity I can only say that personally, in my capacity as Acting City Manager, I know of no other way of dealing with the Police Department than in response to this recommendation of the Attorney General's office.

The administrative concept which generally prevails in public agencies envisions the City Manager as being in direct charge of most city departments and exercising line authority over such departments. The theory of administrative control which is so time honored and so universally accepted that few would dare to raise their voices against it, envisions the City Manager controlling these departments through the various department heads and working toward desired goals and objectives by operating through the established chains of command.

To ignore the chain of command and to deal directly with subordinate supervisors or subordinates and bypass the administrative head of any department, division, or unit would result in such chaos that the organization could not continue to function with even a semblance of efficiency for very long. The most certain way to disrupt, demolish and effect complete confusion is to bypass the chain of command, issue orders directly to subordinates, and to leave intermediate administrators and supervisors groping in the dark in their efforts to ascertain what the administrative policies and objectives of the organization are.

The Charter, Article 7, Sec. 5, (e), Responsibility of the City Manager, reads as follows: "The City Manager shall have supervision and control of all heads of departments, except the City Attorney, City Auditor, City Judge, and elective officials of the city, and shall have power to direct and control the administrative and executive functions of such departments..."

In reading the foregoing provision it is completely obvious that the framers of the Charter who set up the City Manager form of government in the city of Torrance intended that the City Manager would be the administrative head of the city. (Continued on Page 25)

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