

**HOW THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT
WILL HELP DIVERT THE IMPENDING
BALKANIZATION OF LOS ANGELES BY THE
YEAR 2009**

JOURNAL ARTICLE

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This Command College Independent Study Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future--creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

The views and conclusions expressed in the Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

Are major American cities following the trend of the older and more historically rich European countries that have been in continuous conflict?

For the past two hundred years America has had a common theme, and after the Civil War, this theme took even more meaning, a theme of vision for the future.

Relevant questions for the law enforcement industry which were analyzed in this study will be the following:

- ◆ What is the vision of America as we approach the new century?
- ◆ What is the new mythology, which will bring structure to Americans during the next 100 years?
- ◆ How will this new society embrace and support policing in 2010?

American society, given the many radical technological advances and demographic shifts, has blurred the vision. With the cultural and ethnic tapestries, political power structures and diverse value systems inherent in our mix of human beings, the vision is not as clear as it was before. Some believe that if not properly managed, as America's history develops, the tendency to follow the path of the more violent European countries is a very real possibility.

In comparing American peace keeping efforts with that of many older and more historically rich European countries, similarities, differences, and patterns of societal development should be analyzed in an effort to develop insight into their failures and learn from the history and tendencies to revert to violence. In order to maintain peace and order in an international community, a community that reflects many American cities, American policing will have new roles, challenges and a responsibility in facilitating the mobilization of communities and the creation of a clear vision to maintain peace and order amongst the human race.

A Balkanization of sorts is happening to the County and City of Los Angeles.

mirroring the activity which has occurred abroad, or perhaps activity which has been carried over from the by-products of immigration.

One question remains, "when does one's history interfere with the ability to focus on the future?" History is to the nation as memory is to the individual. As an individual deprived of memory becomes disoriented and lost, not knowing where he has been or where he is going, so a nation denied a conception of its past will be disabled in dealing with its present and its future. History has gone too far, however, when one looks at how Nationalism often corrupts a deep, rich history of a nation.

America embodies the ideals that work to transcend ethnic, religious and political lines, creating a common identity for people of diverse races, religions, languages, cultures.

However, over the last few decades, with the celebration of diversity, there is a tendency to turn away from Washington's old goal of "one people." With this comes an undetermined future, which if not managed correctly, could lead to disintegration of the national community, apartheid, Balkanization or tribalization. Balkanization is the dividing of a region or territory into small, often mutually hostile units. The term came from the division of the Balkan countries by the Great Powers of the early 20th Century. The Balkans are a region of southeast Europe which were formerly part of the Roman and Byzantine empires, broke into rival states, which with the exception of Montenegro were independent, but Bosnia, Croatia, Dalmantia, and Hercegovina were part of Austria-Hungary, and Macedonia, Albania, and Thrace were still Turkish.

New immigration to the United States was made possible by the Hart-Celler Act in 1965. As a result, immigrants from Latin America, Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, and the Middle East quickly populated the United States changing not only the racial composition of America, but also altering some aspects of American culture. This phenomena contributed to undermining the concept of race by strengthening the power of American minority groups. Especially in Los Angeles, racial minorities are fast becoming majorities.

In 1990, the Los Angeles region was home to 3.9 million immigrants, 400,000 more than New York, which stood in second place. In foreign-born proportion, its population outranked that of almost every other major U.S. city by a good degree; only much smaller Miami, where 34 percent of the region's population comes from abroad, pulls ahead of Los Angeles on this count. Los Angeles also exceeded the other cities as a magnet for the very recently arrived; the immigrant wave of the 1980's made up 13 percent of the regions population, as opposed to 4 percent for the United States as a whole. The advent of immigrant density also took place more suddenly in Los Angeles than almost anywhere else, Miami excepted. The Los Angeles region's immigrant population swelled from 8 to 27 percent between 1960 and 1990, adding 3.3 million foreign-born residents in the process. In 1990, more than half of Los Angeles's post-65 adult immigrants came from three countries alone; Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala.¹

From a broader perspective, immigrants were responsible for a third of population growth during the 1980's. In 1910 nearly 90% of immigrants came from Europe. In the 1980s more than 80% came from Asia and Latin America. The immigrant population has

viewed America as the asylum for the oppressed and persecuted and America has done well by this policy, that any curtailment of immigration offends the character of America. As such , America's image of a safe and peaceful land of opportunity for all people perpetuates throughout the globe.

Europe was the birthplace of the United States of America, and European ideas and cultures formed the republic. The United States is an extension of European civilization where over 80% of Americans are of European descent.

What America is witnessing in this era of history is the murderous disintegration of one country after another around the globe. Rwanda, with 800,000 people murdered in less than 100 days. The question of the decade is what holds a nation together? William Raspberry noted the following:

“We look with some mixture of sadness and superiority at the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia into ethnic enclaves and fail to see how fragmented a society we in the United States are becoming. We are abandoning even the myth that we are all Americans. We are not yet as ethnically riven as, say, Yugoslavia. But don't ever imagine that it couldn't happen here.”

How has this affected Los Angeles? Los Angeles is like no other city in the nation in terms of its immigrant population. Since 1965, more immigrants have come to Los Angeles than to any other city in the nation. This immigration has been the great driving force of change in this region. There are more community-based ethnic enterprises in Los Angeles than any other metropolitan area in the United States. And while this is a dynamic and rich phenomenon, it tends to benefit some groups while it traps others in permanently low wage jobs. Examples of these enterprises would be the

¹ Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, *Ethnic Los Angeles* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1996), p. 14

Urban League and The National Conference for Community and Justice. Racism and discrimination further exacerbate this problem and further divide societies through demographics including economic, education, ethnic, health and transportation.

While this brief discussion of history has served to define the issue, the remaining content will be more myopic in terms of looking at Los Angeles and perhaps stretching into the future of what can be. This transformation of communities challenges the ability of a police agency, in particular the Los Angeles Police Department, to maintain order, and to protect and serve the community because of the dynamic differences in language, culture, values and perhaps more than anything else, community expectations. The locus of success for a police agency is defined in terms of how the mission, community expectations and resources are aligned and while the mission and resources for purposes of discussion, remain constant, the expectations of communities are vast and constantly changing. As the Los Angeles Police Department exerts its sphere of influence to advocate higher community standards, the sphere of concern from the mosaic community remains dynamic, diverse and continually changing. What should be considered by a police agency such as the Los Angeles Police Department is the dimensional approach to policing. The slices of the problem are as follows: 1) Percent of population as it begins to equalize between cultures; 2) Entitlement slipping away and the fight for more than a fair share; 3) The picture is not reflective of the way things really are and it is failing to catch up with the perception; 4) One ethnic group may outshine the other with disproportionate achievements and as a result the standards are challenged; 5) The historical mystique – internment camps, land use issues, Mexican land grant, statement

like, "in 1389 look what you Serbs did;" 6) How the children are assimilated into society, the values, education and opportunity afforded them.

FUTURES STUDY

A panel of experts, reflecting disciplines and experience related to the area of study, took part in a modified Delphi process to identify and forecast trends and events they felt would have the greatest impact on the research question. They subsequently identified those trends and events emerging or occurring in the social, technological, economic, environmental, and political arenas that could influence the future of the issue.

Trends

- 1 Families become less traditional with more ethnic enclaves
- 2 Criminal society becoming smaller and tougher
- 3 Increasing population with more immigrants coming from countries in conflict
- 4 High tech low touch will move people away from each other
- 5 Communities will experience a cocooning effect
- 6 Ethnic specific unemployment
- 7 Balkanized economic neighborhoods
- 8 Environmental battles will diminish in California
- 9 Europe continues to integrate into a unified world power
- 10 The Latino majority in the City will ultimately control key institutions of government

Events

- 1 High profile trial or major legal event
- 2 Y2K issue
- 3 World wide recession
- 4 Major change in Los Angeles tax policy and redevelopment of downtown
- 5 Major unusual occurrence – natural or man-made
- 6 First Latino Mayor is elected
- 7 Major terrorist incident

Scenario

The development of a scenario is important in order to predict or determine the impact of trends and events. The below-described scenario describes an optimistic view.

Los Angeles Ahead of Major Cities In Lowest Crime Levels Since The 1970's, Communities Energized In Symbiotic Environment, And Civic Leaders Claim It's the Result Of Community Based Government Institutionalized.

The Los Angeles Times – January 10, 2009

Southern Californians, especially Angelenos are smiling, employed, safe and seem to be proving that the experiment of diversity can work even in the ethnic metropolis of Los Angeles. With the California economy booming, unemployment rates are the lowest in 25 years, and educational programs addressing communication and high technology training, Los Angeles has been named the Jewel of the West. With crime falling to levels not observed since the 70's civic leaders, the chief of police and local politicians are beginning to quickly make up lost ground during the 1990's set back. Los Angeles is on the move with foreign investments, filmmaking, land development, higher education and a productive citizenry. Following the 1992 beating of Rodney King the Los Angeles Police Department struggled with the full implementation of community policing, however, after years of fine tuning and perseverance, a successful transition from the institutionalization of community policing to the implementation of community based government transitioned as planned. Rafael Santiago has forced all City Departments to work in unison on community based problems by instilling the concept of territorial imperatives, accountability and measuring not only the crime levels, but the perceptions of crime and community problems.

After absorbing the Department of Airports, Housing Authority, MTA, Port Police and most recently, Parks and Recreation, the Los Angeles Police Department's vision of One City-One police department has taken form. The organization has taken advantage of communications technology, linking up every block captain in the City to daily e-mail messages, with clues to building crime resistance in communities and creating dialog through all dimensions of demographics.

Can this success last? And what will it take to now institutionalize Community Based Government and maintain a police department committed to eliminating racial, ethnic and religious walls throughout the city. What is the next era of policing, or is this the end of the law enforcement evolution?

Institutionalization of Community Police

As the Department continues to institutionalize the philosophy of community policing, and become more consistent with the expectations of our stakeholders; civic leaders, people and the larger law enforcement community, the relationship between the community and the police will continue to improve. As this evolution continues, it is

only the precursor to the larger pursuit of community-based government, which should be the direction of a large, diverse city.

What would be dangerous in this era of high growth, continued immigration and extreme demographic diversity, would be to create organizations or other mobilization efforts which would further divide the communities. Future strategies with regard to community mobilization need to be directed at the idea of unity and not so much on the celebration of diversity. One's greatest weakness is often times one's greatest strength overdone.

As the Los Angeles Police Department and City become more comfortable with geographic information systems and the mapping process, the ability to identify what is occurring in various communities and what is needed by way of government services will enhance the service delivery system. It will furthermore create the impetus to move the City and Department toward Community Based Government, which will embrace the full spectrum of governmental services. Before this occurs, however, it will be necessary for the Los Angeles Police Department to completely evolve into an institutionalized community based policing model. All the tenets of this model will have to be in place and functioning efficiently in order to enter the next era of policing. These tenets include; a partnership between the entire Police Department and the communities we serve with shared priority setting and decision making; territorial imperative; problem solving and a Department-wide orientation to the philosophy.

Universal Values

While there is no ultimate solution, intercommunication between cultures is possible because humanity is the common bridge connecting peoples differences. It is values, which can and often do clash. This is why in many instances, civilizations are not compatible. However, utilizing values as guides to conduct can be dangerous and fatal. To develop core values based on human principles which can be communicated to all the cultures and races, would probably not be possible. To include the stakeholders in the discussions and problem solving efforts is consistent with being in pursuit of the ideal.

Imaging The Future

It is proposed that community organizations, Community Police Advisory Boards, and community based government entities participate in an imaging process designed to imagine the type of human life and culture which would be most desirable for a city as diverse as Los Angeles. Instead of focusing on what was responsible for injustice, oppression, falsity in human relations, imprisonment by stone walls, artificial barriers or conformism, the focus or imagery should be facilitated to include reign of truth, honesty, justice, security, personal relations which is based on human dignity, decency, independence, freedom and fulfillment. Looking back at the history of social imaging, some of the major works of antiquity such as Parthenon, the pyramids, the Great Wall of China, all of which never would have been constructed without a strong guiding image. So the image of a greater Los Angeles, where managing the diversity turns to the celebration of unity through public and private partnerships with the police, and community and governmental organizations. While grand visions have become relatively

scarce in the 20th Century, the time to become visionary with common purpose has never been more important. Views of the future have traditionally been about areas of avoidance such as pollution, traffic jams, ghettos. While technology is advancing at mach speed, it is not technology, which is going to save us, but resources of character to meet our destiny. The resources of character to create new grand visions should be utilized and harnessed to meet this challenge. An example of a 21st Century Grand Vision may be the scene of the earth as seen from the moon, where there are no divisions of nations or states. Perhaps this is the new symbol for the new mythology to come, a global country to celebrate unity. This may be a lofty response but it represents imagery, which creates the framework for people to think and act.

Post Industrial Leadership

The environment is changing faster than society can replace old mythology with mythology that provides the framework with which to live. While cultural and ethnic rituals and traditions should be kept alive in individual communities, it appears that these rituals that once conveyed an inner reality are now merely form. People respond to the environment, but our tradition which has, for so long, given meaning to life, does not respond to the environment anymore. The environment has outpaced tradition and society has confused tradition with traditionalism. Traditionalism has not assimilated the qualities of our modern culture with either new concepts that are possible or new visions which are desperately needed. New metaphors will have to frame the lives of the future, however, this cannot be accomplished until the revolution of change slows somewhat and wisdom catches up with knowledge.

The people of Los Angeles are ready for a societal paradigm shift from the industrial era into a postindustrial era. Joseph C. Rost observed that there have been paradigmatic shifts since the 1930's in sciences and technology that have ushered in the atomic age, the space age, and the computer age, however, none of these shifts have been massive enough or deeply antithetical enough to the values of the industrial era to cause a societal paradigm shift. The new millenium brings with it the opportunity for this shift, and the people who occupy this generation may be the first in history who can reflect upon a true societal paradigm shift, transcending from an industrial era to a postindustrial era. The changes in Eastern Europe prove that what we thought was impossible using the old paradigm are very possible using a new paradigm. The fall of the Berlin Wall was symbolic of this new spirit and postindustrial era where the principle of inclusion shifted from the grave of an old an archaic, exclusive and isolated system of governing people.

Joseph C. Rost stated that with this change, comes the opportunity to provide a new leadership model based on postindustrial values, "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes." Over the past century, the study of leadership has been dominated by great man theories, group leadership as facilitative, psychologists' trait theories, situational theories, and excellence theories. A new model of leadership is the process: it is how that process is done that determines its virtue, not the content of the changes nor is it the traits that may be demonstrated by leaders and collaborators. The process defines both the nature of leadership and its ethical integrity. This new emerging model will encompass the paradigm shift – an entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques which are shared by a community.

Communication Policing

Perhaps in addition to the institutionalization of community policing and eventually the institutionalization of community based government, the next era of policing could be termed "Communication Policing." As it will be the communication process and getting the message out consistently and persistently to all the diverse communities throughout the City. With over 97 different languages spoken in Los Angeles, communicating the message and building crime resistance communities becomes the real challenge. Additionally, the role of the police seems to be shifting from law enforcement to that of peace keeping. Perhaps this will be one of the new metaphors for the executive branch of government. Building strategic alliances with organizations such as The National Conference for Community Justice, a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America. The National Conference promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education. The ability of the Los Angeles Police Department to facilitate other governmental entity and community based enterprises into the mix of providing services will be the key to future success and quality of life in Los Angeles.

Conclusions

As stated earlier, there is no final solution, only a pursuit of the ideal. Whether it be the ideal basic car plan or the ideal community organization, law enforcement must have the necessary components in place to constantly assess the needs of the community. While there is room for area specific planning and resource distribution, law enforcement

leaders need to resist the temptation to further divide communities which could fuel the balkanization effect and create more tension and hostility between people of different cultures and ethnicity's. Mapping of communities must take on more importance and because communities are changing faster and faster demographically, the need to accelerate data collection is ever more important. Los Angeles cannot afford to wait ten years for census data. Fortunately, the new millenium brings with it a new census study, however, this data needs to be current at least every three years.

As the Los Angeles Police Department institutionalizes community policing within its ranks, it must also take the lead in beginning to implement the philosophy of community based government. Any effort, agenda or re-organization of city government, city charter or community organizations, which would result in further division of communities within the city, should be resisted in favor of a unified approach. To do so would exacerbate an already evident problem of divisiveness.

The Los Angeles Police Department mission is the security and safety of the people. This mission should be pursued through a strategy of building communities and the result will be the reduction of the fear and incidence of crime. The goal of this strategy is the attainment of a peaceful society based on the concept of pluralism or co-existence which will be a much more effective strategy than that of policing designed specifically to reduce crime. In a free society, the police are appropriately limited in both resources and authority. A community which abandons its duty to police itself will find that the police can only provide the bare minimum of public order and security.

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