

A letter on the Los Angeles Police Department scandal

17 March 2000

Dear WSWs,

In an unprecedented and flagrantly illegal move LA Police chief Parks announced Tuesday that he is refusing to cooperate with the LA District Attorney Gil Garcetti concerning the city's investigation of the burgeoning scandal involving police officers at the LA Rampart Division. According to the *LA Times*, deputy district attorneys are being told by detectives that they would no longer be made privy to audiotapes, shooting reports and other documents.

With the investigation mushrooming to involve other police divisions, notably the Hollywood and South-Central 77th Street, the LA Police Department is now defying local and state authorities. LA District Attorney Garcetti and State Attorney Bill Lockyer have been working unsuccessfully to dissuade the police chief to change his mind, but nobody is calling for the chief to be disciplined, fired or prosecuted for illegal use of his position for obstruction of justice.

Parks and other senior commanders of the notorious LAPD have condoned illegal activities of officers, which include shootings and beatings of innocent people, instituting a reign of terror in minority and immigrant communities, and railroading innocent people into prisons. Parks has complained that the investigation and prosecutions of lawless cops is moving too slowly. It is plain that the prosecution of a few underlings would be OK with the chief, but with the investigation spinning out of control senior LAPD officials are going to become involved.

A reader in LA

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Socialist Equality Party visit: