

Bureaus and Community Leaders Join Forces To Strengthen Relationships

Open Letter to the Citizens of Portland from Chief Tom Potter

I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere appreciation to Portland's citizenry for the manner in which our community responded to events last week in Los Angeles. I would like especially to compliment community leaders who urged restraint in expressing anger and frustration to the Rodney King verdict.

As a police professional I was both angered and embarrassed by the jury's decision. The actions of those police officers reflect on all police. The Rodney King beating will be a landmark for police in America, and is causing many communities, including Portland, to examine police policies, practices, and the overriding issue of police accountability. The Portland Police Bureau recommit itself to being accountable for all it does, while providing the best police services to all our citizens, regardless of color or status.

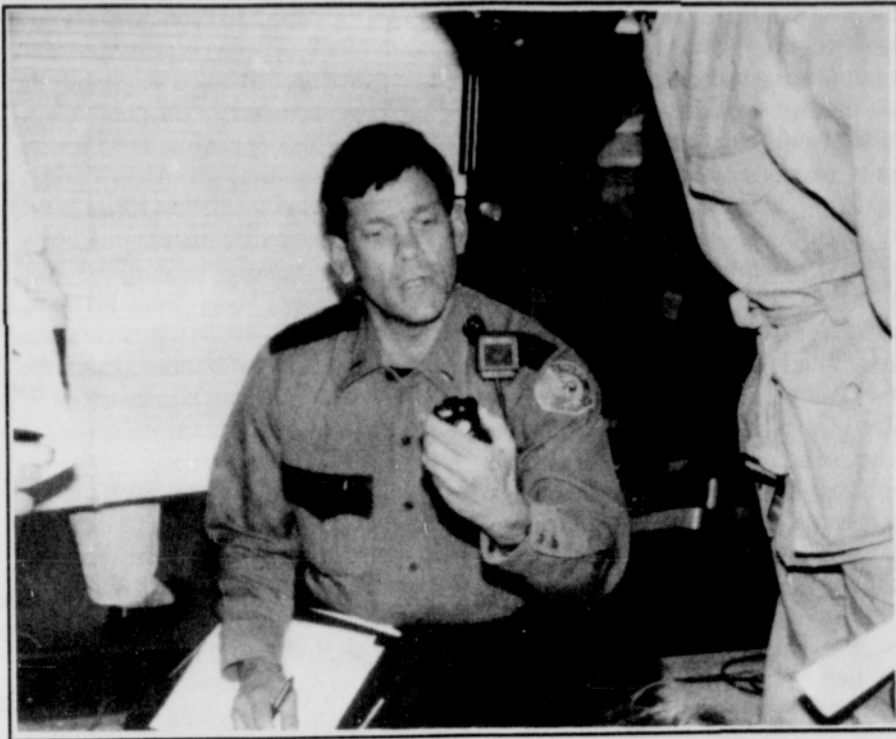
Portland is different from Los Angeles. The last several years has seen the building of trust between the Portland Police Bureau and the community we serve. Yes, we still have a ways to go, but the trust and communication we have been working towards has created a win-win for Portland's citizenry and its police this last week. It provides us

the opportunity to continue to examine the issues of racism and its searing effects on the lives of its victims. We have an opportunity in Portland to work together to eliminate racism wherever it manifests itself, and to further our goals to ensuring opportunities for all of our citizens to a quality education, decent jobs, and neighborhoods free from the fear of crime, gangs, and the debilitating and dehumanizing effects of drugs.

The Police Bureau is committed to a long-term partnership with the community. We know the police cannot do the job by ourselves, and to have a safe community, the police must have a strong partnership based on mutual trust, communication, and commitment. The events of the last week have tested that partnership and, thanks to the efforts of our citizens and police officers, has not only survived but grown. Community policing works.

The city of Portland is working with our citizens on a number of fronts to address the issue of racism in Portland, but we must redouble our efforts. But for a moment we can take pride in our community, its efforts to date, and help each other create the future we want for ourselves and our children.

Thank you, Portland.



Community Residents And Civic Leaders Unite In An Effort To Ease Tention In The Wake Of Rodney King Verdict



Don't Believe Your Eyes The Rodney King Travesty

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taped beating of King spoke for itself. However, somewhere between March 3, 1991 and april 29, 1992 justice had a terrible miscarriage. On April 29th the four "peace" officers that were indicted in the King beating where acquitted on all counts. A mistrial was declared on the case involving on officer. The taped beating of an African American motorist was determined to be justifiable use of force. A nation was stunned, and the African American community was told once again that Human Rights are not for you. This verdict would have even embarrassed the racist regime of South Africa!

Stunned by the verdict, many people took to the streets in protest and in a matter of hours Los Angeles was engulfed in flames. People of all ethnic backgrounds were shocked and riots broke out in several cities across the United States. The anger and disen-

chantment with a system that has failed African Americans repeatedly left the "City of Angels" looking like a "gateway to hell".

While I don't condone the rioting and the looting, I do understand the frustration. I've seen this scenario played over the years time and time again. I only hope that the "lily white" jury can live with themselves after rendering a verdict that is tantamount to capital punishment when it comes people of color.

The United States Justice Department must vigorously pursue this case and rightfully charge the officers involved with federal civil rights violations for the wrongful and brutal beating of Rodney King.

Meanwhile the signal from the courts of this land is justice for all, except for people of color. If you saw the Rodney King beating on tape, the court said "Don't believe your eyes"!

Uniformed Savages Acquitted In Televised Rodney King Beating

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Commission that will do a job that is imperative in these times. And we all understand the economic, social and moral pressures under which we are all operating, here as well as in Los Angeles. We are well aware of an inept and uncaring administration, as well as a do-nothing congress, bogged down in its own shortcomings. But, an adequate description of all the social ills that are driving this rather sick machine would

Statement from Commissioner Mike Lindberg Regarding Rodney King Verdict

I am still in shock. I will probably never be able to express the disgust I feel over the decision handed down by the jury in the Rodney King case. It was an insult to the intelligence of every citizen of this country. It was yet another gaping wound ripped in the body of what is supposed to be justice in this nation. When I heard the news, I felt like I had just awakened in South Africa or been thrown back in time to 1957 Mississippi. I strongly support the U.S. Justice Department prosecution of those officers for violation of

Rodney King's civil rights.

African-Americans and other minorities have long and legitimately contested the inequalities and discrimination in our criminal justice system. After a decision like this, how do you stand up and make a case for believing in justice in America? I am ashamed. We should all be ashamed. Our children have seen the videotaped beating of Mr. King. Who among us could look a child in the eye and explain how the officers could be found not guilty of anything.

My sympathy goes out to all of the innocent victims of the rioting in Los Angeles. Obviously, I condemn the violence, but I cannot pretend that I do not understand the rage. I also appeal to all Portlanders to not allow the shameful verdict in the Rodney King case to undermine the work we have done to establish a positive community-policing atmosphere in our city. I take some heart in the fact that our community produced a jury which rendered a just verdict in the murder of Mulegeta Seraw.

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