

# INJUSTICE FOR SALCIDO: The Left Response to Police Brutality in Cold War Los Angeles

*by Don Parson*

Around 1:00 A.M. on March 10, 1948, seventeen-year-old Augustín Salcido lay dead, shot several times through the skull, on the sidewalk in front of the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations Building on Temple Street near Grand Avenue in Los Angeles' Bunker Hill district. His self-confessed assailant was Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) plainclothes officer William J. Keyes. The official version of events was reported by the press: Keyes and his partner, Ernest R. Sanchez, observed Salcido selling allegedly stolen watches. Detained by the officers, Salcido struggled with Sanchez. Keyes drew his gun and rushed to his partner's aid. Salcido struck the weapon, causing it to discharge, striking Sanchez in the stomach. As Salcido tried to flee, Keyes shot him as he ran, killing him.<sup>1</sup>

This incident occurred in a period of increasing police violence in Los Angeles. During World War II, observed Joseph Woods, "police brutality replaced corruption as the focus of criticism." The steady influx of minority defense workers, whom many city officials regarded as inassimilable, combined with "badge happy" wartime cops helped create a volatile situation. Beginning with the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943, writes Edward Escobar, "the LAPD cultivated the mystique of being the defender of the white middle and working classes against the depredations of inherently criminal racial groups." During the postwar period, the LAPD's reputation as a notoriously cruel and ruthless force deployed against the city's racial and ethnic minorities was greatly enhanced by a growing number of police brutality episodes. The shooting of Augustín Salcido was one such case.<sup>2</sup>

Responding to a “well-organized, well-heeled, insidious” drive against unions, minorities, and democratic organizations, and the perceived need to combat “discrimination and race terrorism,” the Civil Rights Congress (CRC) emerged as a national organization at a conference in Detroit in 1946. The founding of a Los Angeles chapter soon followed. Throughout its ten-year existence, the CRC dealt with a broad range of civil rights grievances such as racial and political discrimination in employment and housing. Most prominently, the organization would vigorously embroil itself in the issue of police brutality against racial and ethnic minorities that exploded during the post-war years.<sup>3</sup>

As could be seen in the Justice for Salcido campaign, an aggressive commitment to social-democratic reform was the hallmark of CRC’s activism. Such reform consisted of popular pressure, through petition and demonstration, brought to bear on elected politicians, bureaucrats, and the courts to redress social injustice. The close ties between the CRC and the Communist Party led the former to be branded as a “Communist front”—a label which tended to obscure and isolate leftists’ commitment to social justice. “The attack on CRC as a ‘Communist front,’” said Gerald Horne, “was meant to destabilize a ‘popular front’ of communists and non-communists. . . .”<sup>4</sup>

The attempt to bring Salcido’s killer to justice would become a minor cause célèbre for both the left and many minority groups in Los Angeles. This campaign would be spearheaded by the city’s chapter of the CRC with input from the Los Angeles Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) Council, the American Veterans Committee, the 40th and 44th Assembly District Progressive Citizens of America (PCA), the National Lawyers Guild, the American Youth for Democracy, the International Workers Order, the Mexican-American Civil Rights Committee, the Jewish People’s Fraternal Order, and the Los Angeles Negro Congress. The effort was heavily reported in the Communist Party’s west coast newspaper, the *People’s World*. With shades of the better known Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee, Guy Endore would write *Justice for Salcido* with an introduction by Carey McWilliams.<sup>5</sup>



The coroner’s inquest into the death of Augustín Salcido was held on March 15. Recovering from his wound at the Georgia Street Receiving Hospital, Ernest Sanchez was unable to appear. William Keyes testified that he and his partner were given instructions from the Hollenbeck police station to investigate a report of the peddling of stolen jewelry at the El Coconito

cafe—a “dive” located at Temple and Grand on Bunker Hill in the Central Division. An individual in the cafe pointed out Salcido to the plainclothes officers as the purveyor of fifty watches. While Sanchez and Salcido “got acquainted” at the bar, Keyes observed their interaction from a booth. Salcido produced a watch and showed it to Sanchez. The two then exited the cafe and headed up the street, followed discretely by Keyes. Turning into the dark and deserted entrance of the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations Building, Salcido seemed to have second thoughts about his situation and struggled with Sanchez after the officer bodily prevented his egress. Keyes approached, drew his gun, and told Salcido to remain still. The youth was then ordered to proceed up the entrance stairway and, near the top of the stairs, tried once again to break free from Sanchez. In the ensuing struggle, Salcido knocked aside Keyes’ weapon, causing it to discharge into Sanchez’ stomach. As Salcido attempted to flee down the stairs and into the street, Keyes called on him to stop and then fired five shots at Salcido as he ran.<sup>6</sup>

Salcido’s autopsy showed that, of the five shots the officer said he fired, one went wild, while three of the bullets passed through the lad’s skull and one lodged in his forearm. One of the shots to the skull contradicted Keyes’ account—it was fired from the side, the bullet passing from ear-to-ear, with powder marks near the entry, indicating that the gun was discharged at a very short distance. Accounts by witnesses to events surrounding the shooting highlighted some discrepancies in Keyes’ testimony. Guillermo Gallegos saw Keyes fire the final shot into Salcido as the youth was falling on the sidewalk outside of the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations Building. Ella Moody, a waitress, saw Salcido come out of the cafe but not with Sanchez. Rudy Salcido reported that his brother already knew Sanchez, so there was no need for them to, as per Keyes’ testimony, “get acquainted.”<sup>7</sup>

Arising from Keyes’ testimony, a number of questions begged for answers: What were Keyes and Sanchez doing in the Central Division outside of their assigned Hollenbeck Division? Where was the stolen property? Of the reported fifty watches being peddled, only the one (allegedly stolen) watch was discovered on Salcido’s body. Why was the youth being “detained” in a dark and deserted hallway? Guy Endore ventured that, despite the official story that there was no such thing as police brutality, “they were going to beat him up.” Ignoring the contradictory evidence and testimony, the coroner’s jury, composed of, wrote the *People’s World*, “sleepy elderly men,” delivered a verdict of justifiable homicide on the basis that Keyes was “in the performance of his duties” as an LAPD officer.<sup>8</sup>

When Augustín's personal possessions were returned to his family following the verdict, among them was a receipt from Silton's Jewelry demonstrating that the watch in question had been purchased for a \$5 down payment. Guy Endore thought Salcido was attempting to defraud Silton's as the purchase blank for the watch, filled out by Augustín, gave a fictitious name, a false address, and non-existent references. Silton's roving agents collected their sales commission upon receipt of a down payment—thus encouraging sales that might not be bona fide. For only a \$5 down payment, Salcido was in possession of a \$70 watch. Guy Endore insisted on putting this in his pamphlet over the protestations of the CRC, who wanted the youth presented to the public in the most sympathetic manner. "Not that Salcido was a 'good' lad," wrote Endore, but there is no way that either Keyes or Sanchez could have been aware of Augustín's fraudulent intent, let alone justify the youth's homicide. "But that's how police brutality works," asserted Endore. "The victims are chosen among those whom some people look down upon."<sup>9</sup>

The verdict of justifiable homicide did not sit easily with many organizations and individuals who had observed or were aware of the coroner's inquest. Those disaffected included many Bunker Hill residents, the *People's World*, Ralph Cuaron of the American Veterans Committee, Frank Pestana of the Community Services Organization, Reverend Hugh Weston, Oscar Castro of the CIO, Jack Berman of the PCA, and others. All of the foregoing, according to Guy Endore, asked the CRC, through that organization's executive director, William R. Bidner, and organizational secretary, Anne Shore, "to push for a re-opening of the case in the interests of justice."<sup>10</sup>

Following the coroner's inquest, the CRC disclosed that Augustín Salcido was not the first person, nor even the first Mexican American, shot by Keyes while he served in the LAPD. On January 10, 1946, the policeman shot Joaquín Lopez in the head, paralyzing him; Joseph González was shot in the back on April 12, 1947, and then hospitalized for four months. In both cases, no crime was suspected or committed by those on the receiving end of Keyes' gunfire. The events subsequent to the shooting of González are revealing and illustrative of the complicity of both Keyes and the LAPD in the process of brutality. In the Pico Gardens public housing project, González and Albert Rodríguez were shot in the back by Keyes and his partner, an Officer Kaiser, who claimed that they were defending themselves from their victims' knife-play. Tried on charges of "assault with a deadly weapon" and defended by Leo Gallagher, who presented sixteen eyewitnesses to contradict the officers' account, González and Rodríguez received a vote of 9-3 for acquittal by the

hung jury. Due to community pressure, the charges were subsequently dropped. "This is a significant victory for the people in the fight against police brutality and frame-ups," stated the Mexican American Civil Rights Committee.<sup>11</sup>

A story by reporter Helen Taylor published in the *People's World* examined the comportment of the LAPD in the Bunker Hill neighborhood. At 109 Olive St., not far from where he was shot, Augustín had lived with his brother Rudy and Rudy's wife, Elsie, in "a room in one of the big, gloomy rooming houses, typical of the area." Despite being assigned to the Hollenbeck division, both Keyes and Sanchez were familiar figures in Bunker Hill, which lay in the Central division. Keyes, according to Augustín's sister-in-law Elsie Salcido, "just hates Mexican people" and had a reputation for beating, harassing, arresting without cause, and shaking down the neighborhood's youth. Nina Gutierrez, a sister of Elsie, had "gone around" with Sanchez before he became a member of the LAPD. "After he got to be a cop, though, he changed," she contended: "He wouldn't speak to any of his old friends—he was snooty. He wouldn't even speak Spanish anymore. He's one of those Mexicans that turn against their own people." Sanchez bore animosity toward Augustín, who told his brother and sister-in-law several days before his death that Sanchez was out to get him. "I don't think Sanchez had any reason for it," said Elsie; she added, "he just didn't like Mexican kids."<sup>12</sup>

The CRC initially directed the efforts of the Justice for Salcido campaign toward Los Angeles District Attorney William Simpson, with whom a March 19 meeting had been scheduled. In a letter to sympathetic community leaders, the CRC's William Bidner requested their active support: "we are anxious to have your participation in this meeting with the district attorney." Hoping to present Simpson with a list of questions "pertinent to a full investigation of the Salcido killing" that arose from the inconsistencies within the testimony from the coroner's inquest and to express alarm at the increase of police brutality cases, the CRC-led delegations—including representatives of the CIO's political action committee, Office Workers Local 246, and Women's Auxiliary; the PCA; the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, and the Mexican-American Civil Rights Committee—were comprised of about fifty citizens. They were, on March 19 and 22, rebuffed by the district attorney when Simpson refused to meet with more than three people. Despite this refusal, the CRC wrote to Simpson on March 28, attaching to the letter a two-page memorandum which would supply his office "with a brief resume of the facts." The memorandum summarized Keyes' testimony at the coroner's inquest,

itemized the inconsistencies and contradictions therein, presented additional information and concluded with a list of Keyes' other shooting victims.<sup>13</sup>

Similar efforts to meet with Assistant Chief of Police Joseph Reed also came to naught. "Repeated attempts by our organization and others to get remedial action by the police department have brought no results," the Civil Rights Congress stated to the City Council in a March 24 letter. It requested that the Council's Police and Fire Committee investigate the Salcido shooting and that the Congress be allowed to submit affidavits, documentary evidence, and eyewitness accounts to that investigation. Attached to the letter was a copy of the two-page memorandum sent to Simpson above. The letter was referred to, and then languished in, the Police and Fire Committee.<sup>14</sup>


The Los Angeles CIO Council was quickly embroiled in the protest of the Salcido slaying as, according to a March 19 resolution: "Mexican-American members of our union in the thousands can testify to the beatings, intimidations, shake-downs, uncalled for arrests and terrorism carried on by the police in the Mexican-American community in Los Angeles." The resolution noted that Keyes had been an instigator in the arrest and brutal beating of Bruno Cano, a member of Local 576 of the CIO Furniture Workers. The CIO reiterated its support of Mexican Americans and other minorities "in their fight against the intimidations, brutalities, and terror tactics of the police department" and called for the arrest and trial of Keyes for the murder of Salcido. Philip Connelly, secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles CIO Council, implored affiliated locals to write to the Los Angeles District Attorney, the chair of the County Grand Jury, the chair of the City Police Commission, and George P. Cronk, chair of the City Council's Police and Fire Commission. Bernard Lusher, of the CIO's United Office and Professional Workers of America, wrote in an April 2 letter to Cronk of how the members of his union had been following, "with increasing dismay," the events of the Salcido case. The accounts of witnesses to the events, combined with Keyes' record "indicates that this man is a danger to society and should not be let loose in the streets of our city, let alone being vested with the power and weapons of a police officer." Lusher demanded removal of Keyes from the police force and his prosecution: "If Keyes is not brought to account, this latest shooting will be a clear sign of official approval for terror against minority peoples."<sup>15</sup>

Sponsored by the PCA, the Los Angeles CIO Council, and the CRC, a memorial meeting for Salcido was scheduled on April 1 to take place in Moose Hall (on Bunker Hill at the top of Angel's Flight). Four hours prior to the scheduled meeting, Moose Hall, threatened with the revocation of its

*Courtesy Civil Rights Congress, Los Angeles  
Records, Southern California Library for  
Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles.*

liquor license, cancelled the contract with the CRC. A hastily-printed flyer was posted to inform potential attendees that the meeting had been moved to the Embassy Auditorium (at 9th and Grand). At that location and to a standing-room-only audience, a mock trial of "the Mexican-American community vs. the LAPD" took place. Leo Gallagher acted as the "prosecutor," Richard Ibañez presided as "judge," while District Attorney William Simpson and Assistant Police Chief Joseph Reed were invited (but declined) to cross-examine witnesses. A citizens' "jury"—including attorney Frank Pestana, American Veterans Committee state chairman Ben Rinaldo, state assembly candidate José Chavez, CIO Furniture Workers business agent Oscar Castro, Union of Office and Professional Workers of America member Ben Rothman, Ed Sinclair of the United Electrical Workers, Mary Lou Parra of the Mexican-American Civil Rights Committee, *California Eagle* publisher Charlotta Bass, Edward Roybal of the Community Services Organization, and PCA leaders Jack Berman and Peter Lord—unanimously found Keyes guilty of murder in the first degree. Philip Connelly linked "the oppressive and brutal police department" to "the rotten corruption at [Mayor Bowron's] city hall."<sup>16</sup>

On April 4, after receiving a manslaughter complaint sworn against Keyes by Guillermo Gallegos, a warrant was issued by Stanley Moffatt, justice of the peace for San Antonio Township (Huntington Park), for the arraignment of Keyes in Moffatt's court. Surrendering himself on the following day, Keyes was released under \$2,000 bail and ordered to return for the arraignment



**STOP POLICE TERROR!**

**BRING THIS MAN TO JUSTICE**

Augustino Salcido, 17 year old Mexican-American is dead, shot five times in the head by a trigger-happy cop, Detective William Keyes. Salcido was murdered. That's the verdict of the people who saw the shooting. That's the verdict of the people who know Detective Keyes.

Augustino Salcido might have been you or me. The man who killed him is known to us. He's the same Detective Keyes who shot and nearly killed Albert Rodriguez and Joe Gonzalez last April. He's the man who shot Joaquin Lopez in 1946.

His victims are always "dangerous criminals". Kids of 17—young veterans of the war. He shoots his unarmed victims in the back or in the face or in the head.

And what has been done about bringing Keyes to justice? **NOTHING!!**

Last week, a *Coroner's Inquest*, with one member of the jury violently anti-Mexican, and another winking knowingly at Keyes—brought in a verdict of "justifiable homicide."

**THIS IS OUR CITY. OUR OFFICIALS ARE ELECTED TO PROTECT US. WE THE PEOPLE OF LOS ANGELES DEMAND THE INVESTIGATION AND TRIAL OF KEYES.**

**WE DEMAND A STOP TO THE TERRORIZATION OF YOUNG AND OLD IN OUR COMMUNITY!**

**YOU'LL BE THE JURY AT A TRIAL OF KEYES**

**MEMORIAL MEETING**

For his latest victim—Augustino Salcido

- THURSDAY, APRIL 1ST
- 8:00 P. M.
- MOOSE HALL
- 300 SOUTH OLIVE (Top of Angel's Flight)
- ADMISSION FREE

**WIRE—WRITE**

DISTRICT ATTORNEY WILLIAM SIMPSON  
ASST CHIEF OF POLICE JOSEPH REED  
COUNCILMAN PARLEY P. CHRISTENSEN — CITY HALL

**DEMANDING INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF KEYES**

Sponsors of:

40th Assembly District P. C. A. — 44th Assembly District P. C. A.  
LOS ANGELES CIO COUNCIL — Mexican-American Civil Rights Committee.  
CIVIL RIGHTS CONGRESS — American Youth for Democracy. Los Angeles Negro Council.  
307 South Hill Street Los Angeles 13, Calif. MA. 6-5121 - 5122

hearing on April 12. The Justice for Salcido campaign would find a sympathetic advocate in Moffatt. Born in 1885, he received his law degree from Stanford University in 1914. Following private law practice in Los Angeles, Fresno, and South Gate, Moffatt was elected justice of the peace of San Antonio Township in 1938. He would proudly refer to his court as a "People's Court" that helped "the downtrodden" (see below). The judge was a sponsor of the Civil Rights Congress and had, in 1946, earned negative notoriety in the Los Angeles press for his gratuitous legal defense of a Communist couple threatened with eviction from their public housing domicile. Moffatt was a leader of Henry Wallace's League of the Common Man and, from 1944-48, first vice-chairman of the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee, from which he resigned in March to become an Independent Progressive Party congressional candidate in that fall's elections. "[A] self-avowed if some-

Courtroom in Huntington Park, April 12, 1948. Moffatt is at left, Scott is in the center, Keyes is at right with arrow.

*Courtesy Herald-Examiner Collection/Los Angeles Public Library.*





what frenzied admirer of Stalin and the Red dictatorship,” the Tenny Committee unkindly described him, “To say that Moffatt has disgraced the justice’s court is to make an understatement.”<sup>17</sup>

In the meantime, principal material witnesses to the events surrounding the shooting of Salcido found themselves in hot water with the LAPD in what Guy Endore described as “Operation Strong-Arm” and “Operation Frame-Up.” Oscar Del Campo, who would offer pertinent testimony regarding Salcido’s allegedly stolen watch, was arrested and then told to leave the neighborhood. Ella Moody was arrested on charges of drunkenness, while a further indictment of “disturbing the peace” was added two weeks later. Moody’s case would be heard in municipal court on May 18 by Judge Joseph Call who, finding insufficient evidence for her arrest, declared her not guilty and dismissed the case. Several hours after signing the manslaughter complaint against Keyes, Guillermo Gallegos was arrested on a charge of marijuana possession. He and his lawyer, Leo Gallagher, charged that the arrest was a frame-up to discredit Gallegos’ testimony against Keyes. The jury at his first trial would vote 7–5 for acquittal on May 25. Tried again, Gallegos would be unanimously acquitted in Superior Court Judge William R. Macy’s courtroom on July 15.<sup>18</sup>

On April 12, in the court of Judge Stanley Moffatt in Huntington Park, the preliminary hearing to determine if Keyes should be bound over to Superior Court to be tried on charges of manslaughter took place. The People were represented by George Kemp, a Los Angeles Deputy District Attorney, while Joseph Scott and A.H. Risse appeared as Keyes’ advocates. The crowd of spectators had, about an hour before proceedings began, filled the courtroom and then overflowed into the corridor. At the opening of the two-hour hearing, Scott filed an affidavit which questioned the ability of Keyes to receive an objective hearing. “This defendant therefore alleges on information and belief,” read the affidavit, “that certain communist-front organizations and certain well known communists were instrumental in securing the warrant of arrest in this action from the Honorable Stanley Moffatt, and that said Honorable Stanley Moffatt is a sponsor of one of said organizations. . . .” “[T]his man doesn’t believe he can get a fair trial before you,” concluded Scott to Moffatt. Moffatt refused to disqualify himself, stating that he had no knowledge of nor prejudice against the defendant, and was certainly capable of conducting a fair preliminary hearing. His motion denied, Scott became openly hostile to the judge, opining that the proceedings were brought to Moffatt’s court to “make you a sucker and a fall-guy for these people. . . . In that affidavit it

states that back of this movement is a communist program that is behind this thing." A heated exchange ensued when Moffatt threatened Scott with contempt charges should he persist in red-baiting.<sup>19</sup>

George Kemp called Rudy Salcido, brother of Augustín, and Guillermo Gallegos as witnesses for the prosecution. Kemp, whose heart was not in his assigned task, elicited little more in his rather innocuous and condescending examination than the events surrounding the death of Augustín Salcido on the morning of March 10. Kemp established that Gallegos had indeed seen the final shot that felled Salcido, but neglected to ask who had fired that shot. The court intervened to pose that question to the witness: "Officer Keyes," was the reply. As anticipated, Scott cross-examined Gallegos about his recent arrest and previous convictions for marijuana possession: "Were you smoking marihuana that night [of Salcido's death]?" Kemp intended to call Ella Moody to further establish events, but she was not present. Scott noted for the record that Leo Gallagher—a sponsor of the Civil Rights Congress, a former Communist Party candidate for California's Secretary of State, and, as Scott had said earlier, "an out-and-out Communist"—was in conference with Kemp. "He has a perfect right to do so," Moffatt pointed out, "We also listen to Republicans in this Court as well as Communists." Following a reading of testimony from the coroner's inquest of March 15, Kemp rested the People's case.<sup>20</sup>

The court asked Scott for arguments that there was not sufficient evidence to hold Keyes over for trial. The record showed, replied Scott, "the presumption" that Keyes was "a police officer doing his duty, and upholding and enforcing the law and order against that that wants to tear down the principles of our government. . . ." "[Y]ou mean to say," Moffatt asked for a clarification, "that there is a presumption that every time a police officer fires a bullet he is within his rights?" Moffatt wanted an argument specific to the particular circumstances of the case at hand—the judge had seen nothing in the record "that justifies him shooting that boy down." Scott read again Keyes' testimony from the coroner's inquest, to which Moffatt again sought a clarification: Was it Scott's contention that "if there is any resistance to arrest that the officer is entitled and permitted to kill a man, is that right?" A frustrated Scott abandoned his defense of Keyes and asked instead if the judge knew why the case had come into his court. "I do," replied Moffatt, "because this Court has been known to help the downtrodden people of the community. It is known as a people's Court out here. . . ." Asked by Kemp if he intended to call witnesses on behalf of his client, Scott refused: "In this court at this time? I should say not."<sup>21</sup>


Leo Gallagher identified himself as a friend of the court ("He is no friend of yours," Scott interjected to Moffatt) and, over the objections of both Scott and Kemp, introduced two witnesses and recalled two others to testify further for the prosecution. Rudolph Cordiero testified that Salcido had actually purchased the allegedly stolen watch from an agent of Siltan's Jewelers for \$5 down. A receipt was produced showing the date of sale as February 9, 1948, though the witness claimed an error in the writing of the receipt as Cordiero had witnessed the sale on March 9, the day prior to Salcido's death. Oscar del Campo reenforced Cordiero's testimony that Salcido had indeed bought the watch. Gallagher recalled Rudy Salcido, who testified that Augustín was in possession of the watch on the evening of his death, and Guillermo Gallegos, who stated that Salcido left the cafe alone just prior to his shooting and not, as Keyes had asserted at the coroner's inquest, in the company of Officer Sanchez.<sup>22</sup>

Apparently finding the direction of the hearing too distasteful, Kemp had abandoned his post, leaving the courtroom when Gallagher began calling witnesses. Nevertheless, Moffatt ruled that there was sufficient evidence to indicate that Keyes was guilty of manslaughter. With his bail set at \$2,000, Keyes was ordered to appear in Department 42 Los Angeles County Superior Court for arraignment on April 27. Salcido's death, concluded Moffatt, "seems to me a very outrageous killing without any justification whatever. . . . I don't like the spirit of Fascism that is sweeping America. It seems to me that the war hysteria has got everybody sort of crazy in this country, and the first thing they think about is to pull a gun and shoot somebody."<sup>23</sup>

Kemp's absence from the conclusion of the hearing was the basis for a telegram from the CRC to Attorney General Fred Howser, accusing the Los Angeles District Attorney of not adequately preparing the prosecution. The CRC requested that the Los Angeles National Lawyers Guild and the Los Angeles Bar Association "immediately investigate the failure of the L.A. District Attorney's office to adequately represent the interests of the people."<sup>24</sup>

On the morning of April 14, an editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* called for the "careful examination" of the California law that allowed any magistrate in the county to issue a warrant, regardless of jurisdiction, for a major crime. Though the complicity of Stanley Moffatt and Leo Gallagher with "Communist front" groups were "important elements" in this case, the paper took no position on Keyes' guilt or innocence. What was involved was a matter of local authority: "There is no reason to go elsewhere." Accused by the *People's World* of having "scrambled on The Times bandwagon," Councilman

# KEYES ON TRIAL!



**Policeman William Keyes**

## WHAT IS YOUR VERDICT?

He pulled the trigger five times on March 10, 1948. And Augustin Salcido was dead.

Salcido's crime? Trying to evade two burly policemen who had him cornered in a dark stairway, held by one and covered by the pistol of Keyes.

This is the same Keyes who has three shootings to his record of the past eighteen months and who boasts of many more.

This is the police officer about which District Attorney William Simpson, Asst. Chief of Police Joseph Reed, and the City Council have done nothing....


It was only an aroused people who have brought Keyes to trial.

**Augustin Salcido** was his victim.

17-year-old Mexican-American, Augustin Salcido was born to poverty and reared in an America which denied to him and millions of others the right to decent jobs, decent homes, and freedom from fear.

One of many thousands, Augustin was used to the bullying and brutality of police who enjoyed pushing him and his friends around.

**Is it any wonder that cornered—he was afraid and tried to get away?**



**The Victim, Augustin Salcido**

**WILLIAM KEYES GOES ON TRIAL ON CHARGES OF MANSLAUGHTER, THURSDAY, JULY 8th, 1948, DIVISION 41—HALL OF JUSTICE, 9 A.M. LET THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE KNOW THAT THE PEOPLE DEMAND A FULL PROSECUTION OF KEYES AND A COMPLETE INVESTIGATION OF THE CITY'S POLICE PRACTICES.**

A complete review of the case will be given at a **PUBLIC MEETING** to be held on **FRIDAY, JULY 9, 1948**—the day after the beginning of the Keyes trial.

## MASS MEETING

- FRIDAY, JULY 9th, 1948
- CONVENTION HALL - EMBASSY
- 9th and Grand—8 P.M.
- ADMISSION FREE
- HEAR: Leo Gallagher, Attorney
- Guy Endero, Author of "Justice for Salcido"
- and others.

**YOUR BALLOT . . . COME TO THE MEETING, HEAR THE FACTS AND CAST YOUR BALLOT**

I believe that Police Officer William Keyes is      **GUILTY** ☐      **INNOCENT** ☐

**OF THE MURDER OF AUGUSTIN SALCIDO**

Issued by the Civil Rights Congress of Los Angeles, 307 South Hill — MA. 6-5121 - 5122

*Courtesy Civil Rights Congress, Los Angeles Records, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles.*

Lloyd G. Davies introduced a motion, seconded by Councilman Ed J. Davenport, instructing the City Attorney to examine, as per that morning's *Times* editorial, the California law that had allowed Moffatt to issue a felony complaint against an LAPD officer for an offense committed outside Huntington Park. According to Davies, Moffatt "was solely concerned with using his court as the sounding board for certain opinions of certain groups." Davenport charged that Moffatt had received support from known Communists and that this episode "is the greatest travesty on justice ever seen

in California." The motion was adopted unanimously.<sup>25</sup>

The following day, the Civil Rights Congress wrote to Cronk in protest of Davies' above remarks, imploring the council to instruct the Police and Fire Committee to call an immediate hearing on the Salcido case "in order to prevent further efforts by those forces, such as the *L.A. Times*, who are interested in promoting bigotry and hysteria to interfere with the due process of law." A letter to the council on the same date condemned Davies' April 14 motion: "Mr. Davies knows, as do other councilmen who are lawyers, that the procedure in the Keyes case was perfectly usual and lawful." (The City Attorney apparently agreed in his May 25 response to Davies' motion, stressing the legality of Moffatt's action and recommending that, in the absence of the frequent or consistent "misuse of the present system," the council should let the current legislation stand.) The CRC concluded its letter by again urging the

Police and Fire Committee to hold open hearings on the matter. "Only through such hearings will the Council, as a whole, be able to get from witnesses the true facts in the situation."<sup>26</sup>

Some of the letters published by the *Times* in response to its April 14 editorial must have buoyed the spirits of the CRC's leftist activists. "Justice Moffatt has long had a reputation for lawfully protecting the underdog," wrote Gwynne Mountain McCord. "His conscience and his ideals as well as his knowledge of the basic principles of American justice . . . have undoubtedly prompted his actions." Identifying himself as a Republican, "a Taft man—conservative enough to believe in justice," James D. Oakes stated that "I believe Justice Moffatt has taken a step necessary in the interests of justice which no Police Court or prosecuting authority would take. No Los Angeles policeman is ever held accountable for his acts." He opined that "Scott's court conduct, as reported, was contemptible—Moffatt's and Gallagher's admirable." One W.P.M. chastised the implications of the paper's editorial: "You seem to forget that a murderer should be brought to justice and that [this] . . . is the clear duty of our justices. Their own political persuasion or that of their associates seems to me to be beside the point." Signed by community leaders active in the Justice for Salcido campaign, a CRC statement condemned the *Times* editorial as "a spectacle of vituperation and mud-slinging calculated to obstruct justice in the Salcido case."<sup>27</sup>

On April 19, a delegation representing the Bunker Hill Chapter of the CRC and the 44th District Progressive Citizens of America, and consisting of Mrs. Bette K. Larson, H. Nordmark, Mrs. Francine Gonzales, and William R. Bidner, met with 9th District City Councilman Parley Parker Christensen and 44th Assembly District Assemblyman Edward Elliott. Christensen and Elliott agreed to the requests of the delegation to "make immediate representation" to District Attorney William Simpson to seek a thorough prosecution of Keyes, and to demand the immediate suspension of Keyes from the LAPD while his manslaughter charges were being determined by the courts. Christensen also agreed to request that the records of the LAPD and of the police commission be turned over to the Council's Police and Fire Committee in order to hold open hearings regarding police brutality in the Bunker Hill community.<sup>28</sup>

Christensen and Elliott were the most sympathetic politicians to the Justice for Salcido campaign. Both were left-wing Democrats and living on Bunker Hill, which was part of their respective representative districts. In the wake of the Salcido shooting, they were pressured by many of their con-

stituents to question actively the matter of police brutality. Christensen had been the 1920 presidential candidate of the Farmer-Labor Party and, when elected to the Los Angeles City Council in 1935, formed the backbone of that body's "liberal bloc" from which he would consistently side with causes and projects (e.g., public housing, rent control, day-care centers, free health clinics, more parks and playgrounds, support for organized labor and minorities) that were constituent parts of the leftist strategy for making a better city. Following his chairmanship of the 44th Assembly District Democratic Club and military service during World War II, Elliott was elected to the 44th Assembly District in 1947. The assemblyman participated with the CRC's attempts to prod various government agencies to investigate the death of Salcido. His habitual partisanship in leftist causes would result in not only frequent citations by the California Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, but the personal wrath of that committee's chair, State Senator Jack Tenny, as well.<sup>29</sup>

The leftist origins of the Justice for Salcido campaign defined the opposition to that movement. Thus the *Hollywood Citizen-News*, in the wake of Keyes' preliminary hearing, editorially queried the motivation of communists in the Salcido shooting controversy. Were they prompted "by their interest in human justice?" No, answered the paper, because "one hears no outcry from them against the brutality, the dishonor, the slavery imposed by the Stalin dictatorship." Rather, the Justice for Salcido campaign was part of "a communist program to make as much trouble as possible for the police. . . ." Councilman Ed J. Davenport, attacking the campaign as a "communist plot," made a motion, unanimously adopted by the City Council on April 28, to have the April 22 edition of the *L.A. Fire and Police Protective League News* attached to the loyalty oath file. While the *News* claimed to be concerned with the Salcido shooting, it was, in fact, little more than a list of the leftists and their organizations active in the Justice for Salcido campaign with corresponding insinuations supplied by Jack Tenny's Un-American Activities Committee, and illustrated by the covers of numerous Independent Progressive Party and Communist Party pamphlets. This information, read the Davenport motion, "will serve as a valuable guide in establishing the basis for the loyalty tests."<sup>30</sup>

When Keyes appeared before Superior Court Judge Thomas L. Ambrose for arraignment on April 27, his lawyer, Joseph Scott, introduced a motion to set aside the order, issued by Moffatt's court, to try Keyes for manslaughter. Scott's motion was based on the grounds that the San Antonio township had no jurisdiction to issue a warrant for Keyes, nor was there probable cause

Courtesy Civil Rights Congress, Los Angeles  
Records, Southern California Library for Social  
Studies and Research, Los Angeles.

or sufficient evidence for an arrest. The pretrial motion was denied by the Superior Court judge on May 5. "The proceedings before Judge Moffatt reflected credit upon no one," asserted Ambrose, but the charges made "concerning the extraneous nature of the prosecution" were irrelevant, and he further affirmed the California law which allowed Moffatt's court to issue a warrant for Keyes. "I cannot see that it was necessary to shoot a man that many times to keep him from running away," stated the judge, "and while Officer Keyes may be able to explain his actions satisfactorily, I feel he should do so at a trial court." The defendant was ordered to appear in Superior Court before Judge Harold B. Landreth on June 16. "I'm glad the man who killed my brother is going to stand trial for shooting him," declared Rudy Salcido subsequent to Ambrose's ruling. He thanked the CRC and the *People's World* "for doing such a good job on this case."<sup>31</sup>

On June 14 Keyes' trial was moved back to July 8. The postponement was requested by the defendant's attorney, Joseph Scott, so that, according to Guy Endore, the lawyer might attend the Republican National Convention, June 21-25, in Philadelphia. As the District Attorney's office had not previously shown much enthusiasm for the indictment of Keyes, a delegation sponsored by the CRC met with the People's advocate, Deputy District Attorney Russell Broker, on July 7 to present him with petitions, signed by more than 2,000 people, demanding that the District Attorney do a thorough job in prosecut-

**KEYES FREED TO KILL AGAIN!**

Judge C. C. McDonald from Yolo County, Monday handed Policeman William Keyes a complete acquittal on a manslaughter charge. . . The judge said: "There is absolutely no evidence that Keyes killed the victim." Yet Keyes admitted before a coroner's jury that he shot Augustin Salcido on March 9th, 1948.

**THEN, IN THE EYES OF THE LAW, WHO KILLED SALCIDO? . . . DID THE 17-YEAR-OLD BOY BLAST FOUR BULLETS INTO HIS OWN BODY?**

**Protest Meeting** To DEMAND William Keyes REMOVAL from the Los Angeles Police Force

Keyes' acquittal is a contemptuous slap in the face to the thousands of people who demanded Keyes' full prosecution. The people were depending on the courts for an unprejudiced and impartial verdict.

**JUDGE McDONALD'S DECISION IS A BETRAYAL OF TRUE JUSTICE!**

**Monday Evening**  
JULY 19th \* 8:00 P.M.  
**Embassy Auditorium**  
Ninth and Grand Streets

If this admitted killer stays on the job then law enforcement officers are above the law and are free to shoot first and ask questions later . . .

**HEAR**  
**PHILIP M. CONNELLY**  
Secretary, L.A. CIO Council  
**LEO GALLAGHER**  
Noted Labor and Civil Rights Attorney  
**DAN MARSHALL**  
President, L.A. Lawyers' Guild

**DEMAND**  
Grand Jury Investigation of—  
• Superior Judge McDonald's verdict in this case.  
• Police department practices and handling of brutality complaints.  
• Methods and verdicts of the coroner's jury.

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ing Keyes. Oblivious to the fact that the arraignment of Keyes would not have proceeded in the absence of pressure by the CRC, Broker chastised “you people [for] defeat[ing] your own purpose by crowding into this case in the first place.” Assemblyman Edward Elliott, a member of that delegation, questioned Broker as to the inconsistent logic in his statement.<sup>32</sup>

The case was originally scheduled to be heard by Judge Harold Landreth, but the ailing jurist was, at the last moment, transferred to civil court. Instead the trial was presided over by Judge C.C. McDonald of Yolo County, who had a reputation as a “convictor.” As Keyes waived his right to a jury trial, McDonald conducted the case from the bench. (This was somewhat of a surprise as many observers believed a hung jury to be Keyes’ best chance to avoid conviction.) Representing the People, Russell Broker called thirteen witnesses during the initial two days of the trial (July 8 and 9). The Community Service Organization had hired a private investigator to inquire into the Salcido shooting, the results of which were being efficiently used by Broker. Walter Camp of the Police Scientific Investigation Bureau testified that the powder marks on Salcido’s face indicated that the bullet was fired at a close range. In addition, while the bullets that passed through Salcido’s skull were never found, the slug lodged in the youth’s arm was determined to have come from the gun of Keyes’ partner, Ernest Sanchez. Bannering the difficulties faced by the defense, *La Opinión* wrote that Broker had “desarrollado una intensa actividad para presentar ante la Corte todos los ángulos que pueden influir en el veredicto que deberá rendirse en el caso Keyes.” Broker conducted the prosecution, wrote the *California Eagle*, “without enthusiasm, but with almost boring thoroughness,” piling up the evidence against Keyes. “[I]t seemed Broker was in there fighting a good fight,” observed Guy Endore.<sup>33</sup>

A July 9 rally at the Embassy Auditorium was sponsored by the CRC. The two hundred participants decided that, whether convicted or acquitted in court, Keyes was guilty of murder; demanded a grand jury investigation of police practices in Los Angeles; called for a grand jury investigation of the methods and functioning of the coroner’s jury; and insisted on immediate assurances from the police commissioner, the district attorney, and the city council that such probes be undertaken. Featured speakers included Leo Gallagher, Guy Endore, and *California Eagle* publisher Charlotta Bass. Addressing the African Americans in the audience, Bass strategized that “We minorities must become more closely united. The Mexican-Americans’ fight is our fight too.”<sup>34</sup>



On the third day of the trial, July 12, Joseph Scott, Keyes' attorney, did not put on a defense but asked the court to dismiss the case as the only eyewitness, Guillermo Gallegos, was a convicted felon who had shown bias and prejudice towards the police. McDonald replied that he did not like to decide cases on technicalities but preferred administering a verdict. Thereupon the defense formally rested and, after a short recess to read the proceeding's transcript, the judge denied the motion and announced that he was prepared to rule on the matter of *People v. Keyes*. As the only bullet lodged in Salcido came from, according to Camp's previous testimony, the gun of Ernest Sanchez, McDonald found the defendant not guilty: "There is absolutely no evidence that Keyes' gun had killed the victim." The testimony of Gallegos, whom McDonald referred to as "that marihuana witness" and "very suspicious," testified that he had seen Keyes firing the final shot into Salcido was dismissed by the judge as "Gallegos saw only one shot and there is no proof that this one killed Salcido." McDonald ruled that Broker had presented insufficient evidence to sustain a conviction of manslaughter against Keyes.<sup>35</sup>

An observer to the trial, Guy Endore wrote that "Broker sat there as if slugged," visibly shaken by the verdict. The prosecutor's bewilderment belied his failure to introduce the murder weapon into the case, his failure to connect the murder weapon to Keyes, and his failure to put on record the transcript of the coroner's inquest in which Keyes testified to firing five shots at Salcido. Was Broker "merely negligent," queried Endore, or "a stumblebum of a lawyer who wasn't equal to such a job?" There was, postulated the author, "a smell of treason and conspiracy in that courtroom." "I gave the case all I had," commented Broker in the aftermath of the proceedings. "It's over now. Finished."<sup>36</sup>

Keyes' acquittal engendered a reaction of indignation and disgust from the leftist activists who had spearheaded the Justice for Salcido campaign, leaving them, headlined the *People's World*, "aghast." "Injustice and police brutality have again been upheld in the courts of Los Angeles!" the Los Angeles CIO Council reported to its membership. Guy Endore termed it an "Injustice for Salcido." The verdict was "the rottenest thing I've ever seen," asserted Leo Gallagher. Carey McWilliams said that he was "deeply shocked" at Keyes' acquittal though "not particularly surprised." The dismissal was "an insult to the entire Mexican-American people," stated Frank Lopez of Amigos de Wallace. "Victims of police brutality, such as the much-publicized Salcido case," editorialized the *California Eagle*, "are beginning to question our claim to [be]

the best country in the world.” McDonald’s ruling, wrote Anne Shore to CRC supporters, “shocked those in the courtroom.” The CRC administrative secretary announced a mass protest meeting on July 19 at the Embassy Auditorium and urged all to attend. “Keyes is free to kill again,” she admonished, “unless an outraged public demands immediate action.” Such demands would include Keyes’ immediate removal from the LAPD and a grand jury investigation of the handling of the Salcido case “and all other police brutality cases.”<sup>37</sup>

At the July 19 protest meeting at the Embassy Auditorium, more than one thousand people heard speakers Philip Connelly, “Hollywood 10” member Alvah Bessie, Guillermo Gallegos, Leo Gallagher, IPP congressional candidate Sidney Moore, and Dan Marshall, president of the Los Angeles Lawyers’ Guild, condemn the courtroom verdict and implore those gathered for continued popular action. Phil Connelly spoke of the need to pound “the full fury of an aroused citizenry against the outrageous licensing of murder.” A unanimously adopted resolution demanded a dismissal of Keyes from the LAPD, a grand jury investigation of the Salcido shooting, and a complete investigation of both the methods and functioning of the Coroner’s Jury and police practices in Los Angeles. Letters and resolutions from “your union, church, organization and your community” were encouraged to be sent to the grand jury foreman, to the police commission and to Police Chief C.B. Horrall. A “Petition for Justice,” addressed to Mayor Bowron, District Attorney William Simpson, the Police Commission, Police Chief Horrall, and the grand jury, reiterated these demands.<sup>38</sup>

At noon on July 20 residents of the Bunker Hill neighborhood (including Guillermo Gallegos and Rudy and Elsie Salcido) and members of the CIO United Office and Professional Workers who were employed at the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations Building gathered for a memorial service. At the curb outside the building (at 610 Temple) where Salcido had been shot on March 10, a wreath of flowers, tied with a ribbon proclaiming “Justice for Salcido,” marked the spot where the youth had fallen. Mollie Mason, executive board member of the union’s Social Service Employees local, laid the wreath after which Ben Cohen, co-chair of the union’s Federation chapter, expressed to the Salcidos the sympathy of his organization. He pledged “to our neighbors that police brutality against minority groups, Mexican, Negro and Jew, must cease.” He then read the resolution that the Office and Professional Workers had formulated in accord with the previous evening’s mass meeting.<sup>39</sup>



Memorial for Salcido, July 20, 1948. Guillermo Gallegos stands behind Mollie Mason, who is laying the wreath on the spot where Salcido died.

*Courtesy Civil Rights Congress, Los Angeles Records,  
Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles.*

In line with the foregoing resolution, a delegation of some ten community and labor leaders met with Assistant Chief of Police Joseph Reed on August 10 demanding the immediate dismissal of Keyes. Reed, according to the *People's World*, "relaxed comfortably in his swivel chair," responding to questions in a manner that was "either calculatingly blunt or coolly [sic] evasive." As Keyes' culpability in the death of Salcido, said Reed, "has been adjudicated in the courts," he "didn't care to answer" questions concerning what the LAPD intended to do about the officer. James Daugherty, representing the Los Angeles CIO Council, concluded the meeting by telling the chief that "the community feels the police department just doesn't give a damn what a man like Keyes does, and it's a serious situation when the police department let's [sic] police get by with whatever form of brutality they want to." On September 27

the City Clerk informed the CRC that, following the recommendation of the Police and Fire Committee, the City Council carried a motion to file all communications regarding the CRC's demand that the council hold "immediate open hearings" into the death of Augustín Salcido at the hands of William Keyes. Keyes' acquittal in Superior Court, held the committee, made the matter superfluous. Following four months of inactivity and open hostility, thus ended city involvement in the CRC's Justice for Salcido Campaign.<sup>40</sup>

Keyes lasted nearly another year in the LAPD. He and Sanchez, Marvin W. Haney, John H. Edwards Jr., and the City of Los Angeles were listed as co-defendants in a lawsuit filed by Sam Sol Matzkin at the end of July 1948. Matzkin claimed that the aforementioned police officers assaulted him in front of his home on October 5, 1947, and then beat him at the Hollenbeck station. Matzkin's suit asked for \$40,000 in personal damages and \$20,000 in exemplary damages. On August 9 the Board of Police Commissioners petitioned the City Council to authorize the City Attorney to defend and/or perform all legal services for Keyes and his co-defendants. On August 17 the City Council's Police and Fire Committee recommended the approval of that request. (The suit was dismissed in June 1954.) In 1949 Keyes became embroiled in the LAPD vice scandal that swirled around Sergeant Charles Stoker. After relating his concerns to officers in the adjacent Santa Monica Police Department, Keyes was suspended for conduct unbecoming a police officer and allowed to resign from the LAPD in July. The CRC considered his departure a "benefit to Los Angeles citizens and a complete justification of our position." However, the CRC added, "Keyes . . . cannot be allowed to cover up his crimes or escape prosecution by the simple method of resigning."<sup>41</sup>



Following the July 12, 1948, climax of Keyes' manslaughter trial, the August meeting was the final organized effort in the trajectory of the Justice for Salcido campaign. Two factors can account for this. Primarily, the process of social-democratic reform had been utilized and exhausted. The CRC and its leftist affiliates had mobilized popular pressure to write letters, pass resolutions, sign petitions, and meet with politicians in order to achieve some social justice from the tragic and wrongful death of Augustín Salcido. By such means, the CRC succeeded, in spite of official opposition and obstruction, in bringing Salcido's self-confessed killer to trial. With the unfavorable verdict, there were few opportunities for the political left to further the consensus-building of social democracy. The CRC would continue to cite the Salcido

shooting as well as other police brutality cases in calling for a grand jury investigation into the policies and practices of the LAPD.<sup>42</sup>

Secondarily, other important projects consumed the time and effort of many leftists. The savage beating to death of an African American, Herman Burns, at the hands of the LAPD in August 1948 led the CRC to form a "Justice for Burns Citizens Committee." "This killing," wrote the leadership of the Committee, "following so closely on the heels of . . . the fatal shooting of Augustin Salcido, necessitates the most immediate action of all citizens and organizations in the community." A consequent sense of urgency permeated mobilization efforts: "If all decent citizens do not raise their voices now to help in the fight against police brutality," admonished a committee leaflet, "you or someone dear to you may be the next victim." Support of the 1948 presidential bid of Henry Wallace and the congressional candidacy of the Independent Progressive Party slate were likewise considered as essential endeavors.<sup>43</sup>

The issue of police brutality during the postwar period became increasingly marginalized—isolated as a civic problem of concern to both Communists and non-Communists—and divided between left and right, leaving little space for criticism, protest or reform. Redbaiting and anti-Communism were the essential elements in enforcing this polarity. Permeating the Justice for Salcido campaign, the attacks on the leftism of the activists "put the Salcido case on a par with Greece, Italy, Czechoslovakia," according to Guy Endore. "It is part of the great cold war." The rabid anti-Communism of the early 1950s, observes Josh Sides, "had a destructive effect on the CRC's civil rights program." Ultimately, the red scare would divert the resources of the CRC away from its focus on police brutality and instead toward concentrating on protecting that organization's own civil rights. As the political persecution of Communists increased, the prestige held by the CRC amongst minorities tended to wane. By 1956 the financial, legal, and political cost of being labeled a "Communist front" would force the CRC to liquidate.<sup>44</sup>

The legacy of the left and its response to police brutality in Los Angeles has a dual perspective, both negative and positive. As to the former, Gerald Horne describes how the effects of the domestic Cold War would haunt the city during the years to come. The fragmentation and destruction of the left, and especially of the CRC, during the 1950s red scare created a power vacuum that would be politically conducive to the conflagration of the 1965 Watts riot. On the other hand, Josh Sides identifies the circulation of struggles and tactics of the CRC to the latter-day civil rights movement as critical.

The left's insistence on popular mobilization to inform and energize an agenda of social-democratic reform would resonate in civil rights organizations of the 1960s.<sup>45</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>14</sup>"Suspect Slain, Officer Wounded in Struggle," *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 10, 1948.

<sup>15</sup>Joseph Gerald Woods, "The Progressives and the Police: Urban Reform and the Professionalization of the Los Angeles Police" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1973), p. 390; "Testimony of Orville R. Caldwell" (Deputy Mayor of Los Angeles), in United States. Congress. House Committee on Naval Affairs, *Investigation of Congested Areas* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 1760-1770; "Testimony of C.B. Horrall" (Chief of the LAPD), in *ibid.*, pp. 1770-1773; Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 286.

<sup>16</sup>Congress on Civil Rights press release, April 3, 1946, American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California (hereafter ACLU) Collection, Box 40, Folder 5, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles; Josh Sides, "'You understand my condition': The Civil Rights Congress in the Los Angeles African-American Community, 1946-1952," *Pacific Historical Review* 67 (May 1998): 233-257.

<sup>17</sup>California Legislature. Fourth Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, *Communist Front Organizations* (Sacramento: California Senate, 1948), pp. 201-208; Gerald Horne, *Communist Front?: The Civil Rights Congress, 1946-1956* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988), p. 25. See also *Civil Rights Congress tells the story . . .* (Los Angeles, [1951]), pp. 1-12 [this is a six-page pamphlet published by the Civil Rights Congress]. "Police brutality in the area gave Los Angeles a well-deserved national reputation that cries about a 'Red Plot' aimed at protesters could not drown out." Horne, *Communist Front Organizations*, p. 337.

<sup>18</sup>Documents dealing with the Justice for Salcido campaign are found in Civil Rights Congress, Los Angeles Chapter Collection, 1946-1956 (hereafter CRC Collection), Box 3, Folders 26-30, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research; Guy Endore, *Justice for Salcido* (Los Angeles: Civil Rights Congress, July 1948), Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Collection, Record Group 1, Box 23, Folder 9. The pamphlet can also be found in manuscript form at the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Guy Endore Papers, Box 1, Folder: Justice for Salcido, Special Collections, UCLA, and serialized in the *People's World*, June 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 1948; "League Exposes Red Plot," *L.A. Fire & Police Protective League News*, April 22, 1948, copy in Council File #27647, Los Angeles City Archives (hereafter LACA), Piper Center. Newspaper articles cited herein without page numbers were found in either the CRC Collection or the morgue of the *Los Angeles Examiner* at the University of Southern California Regional History Center.

<sup>19</sup>Keyes' testimony at the coroner's inquest was read into "Reporter's Transcript," *People of the State of California v. William Keyes*, No. 29434, April 12, 1948, pp. 31-35, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28; Endore, *Justice . . .*, pp. 6-12.

<sup>20</sup>The autopsy report was read into "Reporter's Transcript," *People of the State of California v. William Keyes*, pp. 39-42; Endore, *Justice . . .*, pp. 6, 11, 13.

<sup>21</sup>"L.A. policeman cleared in Mexican boy's killing," *People's World*, March 16, 1948.

<sup>22</sup>Facts in the killing of Augustine Salsido [sic], undated 2 pp. typescript, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 29; Endore, *Justice . . .*, p. 8; S. Guy Endore, "Reflections of Guy Endore," Oral History Transcript, interviewed by Elizabeth I. Dixon, Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles, 1964, p. 182.

<sup>23</sup>Endore, *Justice . . .*, p. 15.

<sup>24</sup>Bidner, form letter plus enclosure, March 17, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; "Brief of the González-Rodríguez Case," n.d., CRC Collection, Box 13, Folder 5; Bidner and Leroy Parra, chairman Mexican Civil Rights Committee, June 17, 1947, *ibid.*; "Victory! The Boys Are Free!" Mexican Civil Rights Committee, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>Helen Taylor, "Police terror area," *People's World*, March 18, 1948.

<sup>26</sup>Form letter written by Bidner, March 17, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; "40 Ask Probe in Shooting," *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 20, 1948; CRC, "The Public Puts Some Pertinent Questions to the District

- Attorney," n.d., *ibid.*; CRC Press Release, "Sharp criticism of William Simpson . . .," n.d., *ibid.*; "Second rebuff," *People's World*, March 24, 1948; Shore and Bidner to Simpson, March 26, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 25; "Investigation of Salcido Shooting Is Demanded," *Eastside Sun*, April 2, 1948, 1.
- <sup>14</sup>Endore, *Justice* . . . , p. 15; Bidner and Shore to City Council, March 24, 1948, Council File #32589, LACA, copy in CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 29; Councilman Don A. Allen to Bidner, March 29, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28.
- <sup>15</sup>"Resolution on the Slaying of Augustino [sic] Salcido and Police Terrorism Against Mexican-Americans," Los Angeles CIO Council, March 19, 1948, Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Papers of Philip M. Connelly, Executive Secretary Los Angeles CIO Council, Record Group No. 3, Box 9, The Urban Archives Center, University Library, California State University, Northridge; "Your Action Needed to Stop Murder!," Philip Connelly, March 25, 1948, *ibid.*; Lusher to Cronk, April 2, 1948, Council File #32796, LACA.
- <sup>16</sup>Flyer, "Stop Police Terror!," n.d., CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; CRC Flyer, "Police Intimidation Must Stop!," April 1, 1948, *ibid.*; Bidner and Shore, "Program for the April 1 Memorial Meeting," n.d., CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 29; Endore, *Justice* . . . , p. 15; "Memorial meeting set for police victim," *People's World*, March 29, 1948; "Peoples' jury finds cop guilty," *Labor Herald*, April 6, 1948; "Fight to Avenge Shooting," *Eastside Sun*, April 9, 1948, 1; "The verdict: Murder," *People's World*, April 10, 1948. The program also listed Dr. H. Claude Hudson as a potential juror, but he was not mentioned in the press coverage.
- <sup>17</sup>"Policeman Must Face Trial in Fatal Shooting of Suspect," *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 5, 1948; Don Parson, "The Burke Incident: Political Belief in Los Angeles' Public Housing during the Domestic Cold War," *Southern California Quarterly* 84 (Spring 2002): 62-63; Fourth Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities, *Communist Front Organizations*, p. 172.
- <sup>18</sup>Endore, *Justice* . . . , pp. 15-18; Ella Moody, "Affidavit," pp. 2-3, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 29; "Another witness in cop shooting held," *People's World*, March 30, 1948; "Accuser of officer arrested in slaying charges arrest is frame-up," *Los Angeles Daily News*, April 7, 1948; "Salcido case victory won in court," *People's World*, May 19, 1948; "Gallegos Facing New Dope Trial in Jury Deadlock," *Los Angeles Examiner*, May 26, 1948; CRC Press Release, "Guillermo Gallegos, chief witness against . . .," n.d., CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28; "Jury Frees Man Who Claimed Police 'Frame,'" *Los Angeles Examiner*, July 16, 1948, Pt. I, 15.
- <sup>19</sup>"Objections to the Qualifications of Honorable Stanley Moffatt, Justice of the Peace, to Sit on [or] Act in any Further Proceedings Herein," [April 12, 1948], Council File #32796, LACA; "Reporter's Transcript," *People of the State of California v. William Keyes*, No. 29434, April 12, 1948, pp. 4-14, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28. See also coverage by the press: "Charge red move in arrest of officer," *Los Angeles Daily News*, April 12, 1948; "Red Charges Fly in Tiff With Judge in Police Slaying Quiz," *Los Angeles Herald and Express*, April 12, 1948; "Judge Rows With Lawyer at Hearing," *Los Angeles Times*, April 13, 1948, Pt. I: 1, 2; "Moffatt Refuses to Step Down in Case," *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 13, 1948; "Cop must stand trial for killings," *People's World*, April 13, 1948, 1; "Communist, Red-Baiter Charges Fly Between Lawyer, Judge in Court," *Hollywood Citizen-News*, April 13, 1948.
- <sup>20</sup>"Reporter's Transcript," *People of the State of California v. William Keyes*, pp. 3, 14-43.
- <sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 43-50.
- <sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 52-64.
- <sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 62, 65-66.
- <sup>24</sup>Bidner to Howser (draft telegram), April 12, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28; "CRC Charges D.A.'s Office Failed To Prepare Adequate Prosecution In Salcido Case," *California Eagle*, April 15, 1948.
- <sup>25</sup>"Case of Justice Stanley Moffatt," *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 1948, Pt. II: 4; "Council echoes L.A. Times, joins attack on Moffatt," *People's World*, April 15, 1948; "Moffatt Action Rouses Council," *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1948, Pt. I: 5; "Judge Moffatt Assailed by City Council," *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 15, 1948.
- <sup>26</sup>Bidner to Cronk, April 15, 1948; Bidner and Shore to City Council, April 15, 1948; Ray L. Chesebro and Bourke Jones, "Re: Preliminary Hearing of Officer Keyes in Huntington Park for Offenses to have been Committed in Los Angeles," May 25, 1948; Council File #32796, LACA.
- <sup>27</sup>"Letters From Readers," *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 1948, Pt. II, 4; "Community Leaders Support Civil Rights Congress In Condemning Editorial," *Eastside Sun*, April 30, 1948, 1.
- <sup>28</sup>CRC press release, April 19, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; "Parley Christensen, Ed Elliot Demand Salcido Prosecution," *Eastside Sun*, April 23, 1948, 1.
- <sup>29</sup>Bidner and Shore to Christensen, March 24, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28; Elliott to Henry Duque (President of the L.A. Police Commission), March 30, 1948, *ibid.*; Bidner, Shore plus twenty-five 9th Coun-

- cil District residents to Christensen, April 15, 1948, *ibid.*; John Raymond Sillito, "Parley P. Christensen: A Political Biography, 1869-1954" (Masters Thesis, University of Utah, 1977), *passim*. A political biography of Elliott needs to be written.
- <sup>30</sup>"Small But Important Case," *Hollywood Citizen-News*, April 13, 1948; "Killer-cop defended," *People's World*, April 29, 1948; *L.A. Fire and Police Protective League News*, April 22, 1948, Council File #27647, LACA. A municipal loyalty oath ordinance was, at that time, being considered by the council, which approved it in October.
- <sup>31</sup>"Move to Free Policeman in Slaying Filed," *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 28, 1948; "Keyes Manslaughter Trial Ordered," *Los Angeles Examiner*, May 6, 1948, Pt. I, 9; "Salcido lauds rights group, 'World'," *People's World*, May 7, 1948.
- <sup>32</sup>"Keyes trial delayed," *People's World*, June 15, 1948, 3; Endore, *Justice . . .*, p. 24; "D.A. snubs Salcido delegation," *People's World*, July 8, 1948, 1.
- <sup>33</sup>"Es Difícil la Posición del Oficial W. Keyes," *La Opinión*, July 9, 1948, 1, 8: translation reads—"developed an intense momentum in order to present before the Court all of the angles that can influence the verdict which should be yielded in the Keyes case"; "Keyes Slaying Trial Opens," *Los Angeles Examiner*, July 9, 1948; "Keyes' story contradicted; 'Knew Gallegos,' cop admits," *People's World*, July 10, 1948, 3; Helen Taylor, "Keyes set-back," *People's World*, July 12, 1948, 1, 2; Jay Morgan, "Salcido Killer Exonerated; No Evidence, Judge Decides," *California Eagle*, July 15, 1948, 1, 2; Endore, *Justice . . .*, p. 29.
- <sup>34</sup>CRC Flyer, "Keyes On Trial!" CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; "Verdict of 200 citizens: Keyes guilty of murder," *People's World*, July 12, 1948.
- <sup>35</sup>*People v. William Keyes*, Superior Court #119357, Los Angeles County Courthouse; Endore, *Justice . . .*, p. 30; "Officer freed in shooting of youth," *Los Angeles Daily News*, July 12, 1948, 5; "Policeman Cleared in Shooting," *Los Angeles Herald and Express*, July 12, 1948; "Salcido case dismissed," *People's World*, July 13, 1948; "Policeman Freed in Youth's Death," *Los Angeles Times*, July 13, 1948, Pt. II, 3; "El Detective Keyes fue Absuelto Ayer," *La Opinión*, July 13, 1948, 1.
- <sup>36</sup>Endore, *Justice . . .*, pp. 30-31.
- <sup>37</sup>William Lawrence, Ernest Massinger and Connelly to "Dear Sir and Brother," July 14, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28; Endore, *Justice . . .*, 29; "Jury probe, Keyes firing demand," *People's World*, July 14, 1948; "Citizens aghast," *ibid.*; "The Salcido Case," *California Eagle*, July 15, 1948, 6; Shore, form letter, July 15, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; "Keyes case verdict stirs more protest," *People's World*, July 16, 1948.
- <sup>38</sup>Flyer: "Keyes Freed to Kill Again!" CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 30; "Call to arms' on killer cops," *People's World*, July 21, 1948; "Resolution," n.d., CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 29; CRC, "Proposed Plan of Action for Furthering the Fight to End Police Brutality in Los Angeles," n.d., *ibid.*; "Petition for Justice!" n.d., *ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup>"In memory—a wreath of flowers," *People's World*, July 17, 1948; "Noon rites for dead youth, rally set," *People's World*, July 19, 1948; "Wreath for Salcido," *People's World*, July 21, 1948.
- <sup>40</sup>Shore to "Dear Friend," August 4, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 29; "Police clam up on Keyes' protests," *People's World*, August 11, 1948, 3; City Clerk to CRC, September 27, 1948, CRC Collection, Box 3, Folder 28.
- <sup>41</sup>*Sam Sol Matzkin v. William J. Keyes, et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior Court #547914; Helen Taylor, "Killer-cop named in \$60,000 suit," *People's World*, July 31, 1948; Esther Sharpe, secretary of the Board of Police Commissioners, to City Council, August 9, 1948, Council File #34278, LACA; Police and Fire Commission to Council, August 17, 1948, *ibid.*; "Police Shot Woman 'Spy,' Officer Says," *Los Angeles Examiner*, July 26, 1949; Charles Stoker, *Thicker 'n Thieves* (Santa Monica: Sidereal Company, 1951), pp. 348-351; Margie Robinson and Anne Shore to Dear Friends, August 1, 1949, ACLU Collection, Box 40, Folder 5.
- <sup>42</sup>Shore to Harry Laesione (foreman of the Los Angeles County Grand Jury), July 7, 1949, ACLU Collection, Box 40, Folder 5.
- <sup>43</sup>Material on the Burns case can be found in the CRC Collection, Box 1, Folders 10-19; Carey McWilliams, Anne Shore, H. Claude Hudson, Charlotta Bass, and Augustus Hawkins to Dear Friends, August 28, 1948, ACLU Collection, Box 40, Folder 5; Justice for Burns Citizens Committee, "Los Angeles Police Killed This Man!" n.d., *ibid.*
- <sup>44</sup>Endore, *Justice . . .*, p. 18; Sides, "You understand my condition," pp. 251-253; Horne, *Communist Front?*, 354-358.
- <sup>45</sup>Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (New York: De Capo Press, 1997); Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).