

Long Beach's No. 1 thug

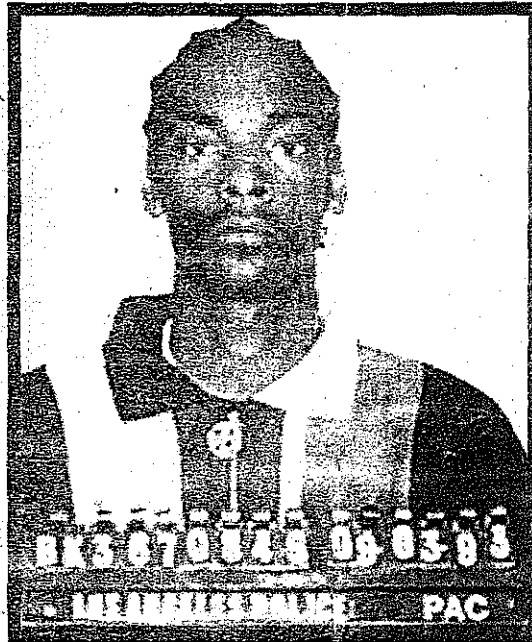
By Patrick O'Dowd

I love Long Beach. I work here as a police officer and spend much of my off time here in the restaurants, on the golf courses, and in the parks. However, on Saturday, June 28, for the first time, I was embarrassed to be associated with this city.

On this day, I was called in to work early along with a dozen of my fellow officers to provide security at Long Beach Poly High School. Snoop Dogg, the Rolling Twenties Crip gangster-turned rap star, decided to host a basketball game there.

The members of the Long Beach Police Department are very familiar with Snoop Dogg. He was born and raised in Long Beach. He has committed many crimes in this city. He and his fellow members of the Rolling Twenties Crip street gang have terrorized the innocent citizens of Long Beach for years — killing them, stealing from them, and selling drugs to them. Snoop Dogg and his posse have struck fear into the hearts of citizens living in certain parts of Long Beach, making them think twice for their safety before leaving their homes. However, this is a free country and I suppose Snoop Dogg has a right to hold a charity basketball game if he stays within the laws of the city.

During the half-time festivities at Snoop Dogg's charity basketball game in Poly High School's gymnasium, I heard a voice come over the public address system. This female speaker began yelling, "Give it up for Snoop Dogg! Come



on, Long Beach. Show him some love!" As the young, impressionable, teenage spectators began yelling at the tops of their lungs in appreciation of this convicted felon and admitted gang member, the speaker apparently did not feel they were yelling loudly enough. She continued by saying something to the effect of, "Come on, Long Beach, is that all you got? We don't show Snoop enough love for all he does for this city. Now show him some love!" The crowd's cheers

reached a fever pitch. The last straw was when the speaker called Snoop Dogg "Long Beach's No. 1 son."

It seemed ironic that Snoop Dogg was being thanked for all he has done for this community. Is it that easy to erase a decade of participation in gang-related criminal activity? Can a charity basketball game make up for all the blood Snoop Dogg and his fellow gang members have spilled on the streets of Long Beach? I chalked it up to the fact that the speaker was surely some type of rap music promoter who neither knew of nor cared about the crimes in Snoop Dogg's past or the gang affiliations he still claims.

Not until the speaker introduced herself as Councilperson Laura Richardson did I become embarrassed to be associated with this city.

How sad that a few thousand dollars thrown into a charity event could turn a councilperson's head and make her forget where that money came from. Surely there are many other products of Long Beach who are more deserving of the title "Long Beach's No. 1 son" before an admitted street thug like Snoop Dogg. By bestowing such lavish praise upon a person such as Snoop Dogg, Richardson alienates all the hard-working, law-abiding citizens of this great city. I think she owes us all an apology.

Patrick O'Dowd is a gang detective with the Long Beach Police Department.