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LA TIMES

# Charges Against Criminologist 'Vendetta,' Chief Davis Says

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Charges that police criminologist DeWayne A. Wolfer erred and violated procedure in the ballistics investigation of the Robert F. Kennedy assassination and other murder cases are part of a "vendetta" against Wolfer, Police Chief Ed Davis said Tuesday.

"I think that we're going to find that the charges are totally untrue," Davis said during a news conference

called to announce a Citizens Neighborhood Watch Campaign against burglaries and other crimes.

He said that Wolfer, "in my estimation, is the top expert (in criminology) in the country."

Davis has ordered a police board of inquiry to investigate the charges, made to the Civil Service Commission by attorney Barbara Warner Blehr in an effort to block Wolfer's appointment as permanent head of the police crime laboratory.

Commenting on one of Mrs. Blehr's charges, that Wolfer test-fired a different gun entirely from the one Sirhan B. Sirhan used to shoot Kennedy, Davis said, . . .

"A similar type gun was used just to test the noise . . . to determine whether the sound would carry to where witnesses said they heard shots."

## Stipulation by Defense

He added that the Sirhan defense stipulated to the use of the similar weapon in this manner.

Davis said that criminologists supporting Mrs. Blehr's charges had been bested by Wolfer in murder trials. The chief intimated that they were using this means to get back at Wolfer.

Mrs. Blehr "just lost an important case in court," Davis said. He did not elaborate.

Told of Davis' comment, Mrs. Blehr said, "What important case is he talking about? Frankly, I haven't had any lately. Oh, there was one murder case in Pasadena recently that I lost, justifiably so, but that had nothing to do with LAPD. That was a sheriff's office case and they were just great."

Mrs. Blehr also denied that her action represented a "vendetta"

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gest they have a neighborhood watch."

Representatives of more than a dozen leading supermarket chains in Southern California were introduced by Davis at the news conference.

William Tormey, executive vice president of the Southern California Grocers Assn., predicted that the antiburglary campaign will make an "impact," as 15 million persons pass through the checkstands of Los Angeles supermarkets every three days.

On another matter, Davis said he found it "encouraging" that black, Mexican-American and Jewish voters were the deciding factor in approving pension increases for Los Angeles policemen and firemen in last Tuesday's election.

## Support Upheld

The chief said that their action refuted an attempt by some people "to pin on us the label that we don't get along with minority groups."

Shortly after the news conference, Davis left for Washington to attend a meeting of the International Assn. of Chiefs of Police. He is a member of the organization's executive committee.

Davis said the group undoubtedly will make plans to work for a "cool and peaceful summer," despite "uptight" situations in New York over the recent killing of two policemen and in Mississippi over the slaying of a black school girl.

He said he would welcome the opportunity to meet with President Nixon while there if such an invitation is forthcoming.

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against Wolfer. "I honestly don't personally know any of these gentlemen," she said.

Davis said that leveling charges against Wolfer was "one way of getting a lot of publicity for someone." The publicity, though, may not be so good "when the facts finally come out," he added.

The chief said that Wolfer, who has 20 years' experience in his field, has had his reputation "damaged" by the charges and that "I understand he has a good civil lawyer."

**2,000 Supermarkets**

Davis announced at the Parker Center news conference that more than 2,000 supermarkets in Southern California are participating in the citizens Neighborhood Watch Campaign.

They are distributing to their customers anti-burglary brochures and window and bumper stickers and grocery bags bearing printed crime-prevention slogans.

Purpose of the campaign is to stimulate citizens to the practice of keeping an eye on a neighbor's home when he is away and to call police if anything suspicious is noticed.

Davis pointed out that a burglary is committed in Los Angeles every eight minutes and that last year property valued at more than \$32 million was stolen from citizens.

"What if you can't trust your neighbor?" Davis was asked.

"There is honor amongst thieves," the chief replied. "If two thieves live next door to each other, I sug-