

'The Toughest Cop In America' Campaigns for Mayor of Philadelphia

By **LENORA E. BERSON**

PHILADELPHIA.

THE time is between 7:30 and 8 in the morning when the harsh voice with the flat, nasal tones of a born and bred row-house Philadelphian begins 16 hours of intermittent short-wave broadcasting over the J band.

"There is a pothole at the intersection of Cheltenham and Germantown. . . . Traffic is backing up near the Girard Avenue Bridge. . . . A disabled vehicle is blocking the right lane of the Schuylkill Expressway near the Spring Garden Street exit. . . ."

The voice rises to annoyance: "Litter is lining the curb between 17th and 16th on the south side of Race." Anger enters at the sight of a policeman with his tie undone or his cap askew. It escalates into rage at reading spray-can graffiti or upon seeing large groups of blacks loitering. Then, just as suddenly, the emotion evaporates and the talkathon resumes: "There is a maroon, 1967 T-Bird parked illegally at the corner of North 11th Street. . . ."

This is how Philadelphia police remember the daily monologue that in recent years came to them from the front seat of a highly polished 1970, black Chevrolet sedan. It was beamed into 639 patrol cars and 174 emergency wagons. It was received in 88 district police stations across the city and at scattered sites within the dumbbell-shaped, concrete Police Administrative Building (P.A.B.).

It was the voice of the man who liked to call himself the toughest cop in America and was frequently mentioned in the Philadelphia press as a possible successor to J. Edgar Hoover, Police Commissioner Frank

Rizzo, as he made his early morning progress from his modest house in the Mount Airy section to the downtown nerve center of his 7,000-man force. "When you heard that voice," said Chief Inspector Harry Fox, a 30-year veteran of the force, "you knew he had hit the street."

Now it is not only the police who are tuned into Frank Rizzo. Boosted by the high-voltage issue of law and order, the 50-year-old Rizzo is a candidate for Mayor. He has resigned as Commissioner after 27 years with the police to seek the Democratic nomination in a May 18 primary election. Announcing his candidacy in February at the P.A.B., he said:

"Without sounding corny, Philadelphia is my town. I love Philadelphia. You hear so much about dying cities. Decaying cities. I don't think this has to happen. With proper leadership, we can make this a better city. I think I can provide that leadership. I've run a bigger organization than any of my opponents and I think I'm better qualified to be Mayor than most people. . . . I'm the only one who can save this city."

Although Rizzo is not the only policeman to run for Mayor in a major American city, he is the first incumbent Police Commissioner to do so. He is also probably the first to announce his candidacy from a police station—an announcement that brought both joy and terror to the city. For nobody in Philadelphia is neutral about Frank Rizzo. "You might say that the Commissioner is a charismatic figure," redheaded Inspector James Herron explained. "You either love him or you hate him. But I think you'll find that most people love him."

Herron was Rizzo's public-relations man. Within the P.A.B., Herron's evaluation of his former boss's popularity is certainly accurate. My own opinion may be shaped partly by the fact that my husband is a Pennsylvania

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MAN OF ACTION. Nightstick tucked in his dinner jacket, Frank Rizzo takes charge at the scene of a disturbance he learned of while attending a banquet.



The time is 1969, when he was Police Commissioner. He is still a hero to many Philadelphians frightened by crime rates and black militancy.

"I'm the only one who can save this city," says Frank Rizzo, former Police Commissioner. Whether the voters want to be saved by his methods should be clear after a Democratic primary this week.

State Representative who is active in Reform Democratic politics in Philadelphia and has opposed Rizzo in the primary campaign.

However, I have tried to report fairly what both those who love Frank Rizzo and those who hate him say about the man, from a series of interviews that began well before the campaign and included many policemen—though Rizzo himself refused to talk with me. To see both sides of Candidate Rizzo, we need to go back and observe him during a typical day when he was Commissioner Rizzo.

THERE is a sense of excitement as the shiny black car carrying the Commissioner pulls into the parking lot. The car itself is an extension of Rizzo's personality. "He's meticulous about it," Inspector Fox said. "It has to be just right. If there's a speck of dust he raises the roof and it has to be washed and thoroughly cleaned. The Commissioner is the cleanest man I ever met."

As Rizzo emerges from the sedan, civilians, plainclothesmen and uniformed officers swarm around him. Even in a crowd of policemen, most of whom are big, Rizzo stands out. He is 6 feet 2 and weighs close to 240 pounds. His conservative, narrow-lapelled, dark suits seem barely able to contain the force and energy in his huge chest and shoulder muscles.

Slowly he moves across the block-wide parking lot, down the serpentine corridors of the starkly modern P.A.B. building and into the circular elevator that carries him to his third-floor executive suite. It often takes him half an hour to make this short trip. Smiling, patting his men on the back, reiterating such phrases as "You're my boy" or "You're a good man," he makes his way through the crowd, listening, as he goes, to the minutiae of the ordinary cop's life—a problem with a squad car, a broken radio transmitter, a son who wants a scholarship, a relative who needs

kidney-machine therapy. He takes a personal interest in each case and sees that an answer is given to each request.

Although Rizzo looks like a prize fighter making his way from the ring to the dressing room in such gatherings, there is also something of the Old World *padrone* in his manner. To him it is never the impersonal "Police Department": it is always, "my men," "my army." For the men, too, are an extension of the Rizzo personality—a personality constantly at war with privately construed forces of evil.

"The first thing the Commissioner gets when he comes in is a log of things that happened during the night." Fox flipped through a thick sheaf of blue mimeographed paper which detailed car thefts, assaults, robberies, routine homicides and rapes. Each item gave a detailed description of the suspects. Most were black men, but the word "Negro" was invariably spelled with a small "n."

"Of course if it's anything really major—a gang war, a potential riot, that kind of thing—we call the Commissioner during the night," Fox continued. "He wants to be called. He wants to be on top of everything. It is not unusual for us to call him two or three times a night. He has no hobbies. Oh, he gardens a little and he used to hunt before he got this job, but his whole life is the force. He rarely takes a vacation, and, when he does, he doesn't go far away. Even then he checks in three or four times a week.

"Within minutes after he gets a call that he thinks merits his attention, he's in his car to take personal command. You can hear him coming on the J band."

The J band is the open police frequency. All police radios are able to receive and transmit on it. All major crimes, incidents, and "assist-officer" calls go out over it.

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'Toughest cop in America'

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Although the police had radios long before Rizzo, he has made them a very special instrument.

The Commissioner finds silence intolerable. He is compelled, whenever he is near a police radio and has nothing else to do, to broadcast into it. To relieve his force of similar tension, he has instructed his radiomen to fill quiet time with one of 52 slogans. Preceding such lines as, "Think twice, once for the other guy," or, "Don't lose your prisoner or your reputation—use handcuffs," are three loud attention beeps and one repetition of the command, "Attention, all police!"

After perusing the log, Rizzo begins a day during which he talks with a hundred or more people in person or on the telephone. The first to enter his office is Lieut. William (Murph) Young with a sheaf of official documents and a pile of mail winnowed from a stack more than a foot high. The mail is not limited to police matters, but covers the whole range of human problems, from pleas for money to aid a sick relative to requests for help in getting a street fixed. Rizzo orders his staff to answer all such requests.

The mail completed, Rizzo is briefed by Capt. James Powers on the location of police cars on the street, the number of men on special assignment and the number on sick leave.

Next to enter are Deputy Commissioners Robert Selfridge, who is in charge of all uniformed officers, and Morton Solomon, who commands the plainclothesmen. They are a matched pair of silent men. Selfridge has startling blue eyes and the weather-beaten look of a retired sea captain. Solomon's face is gray with heavily lidded brown eyes and incongruous Kewpie-doll lips. Selfridge reports on the deployment of uniformed police, and Solomon lists the murders, burglaries and robberies under investigation.

Rizzo, temporarily silent but never still, takes off and puts on the horn-rimmed glasses he wears only in private, occasionally rubs his dark brown eyes with his forefinger or thumb. He gets impatient with Selfridge and waves his right hand. The deputy stops speaking immediately.

"Now, Bobby, I want it

done this way." Quickly Rizzo reorders the details of a particular uniformed man's assignment.

The Commissioner is known for the speed and sureness with which he makes decisions on everything from the number of men to send out on a bank robbery to the details of a summer uniform.

BY 9:30 the deputies have finished and returned to their offices to carry out their orders. Solomon and Selfridge run the department's day-to-day operations. Unlike their chief, they are men of some education. Although neither has a college degree, both have completed a series of special, university-based police courses.

The Commissioner usually goes to lunch after meeting with the press. Before leaving, he follows a ritual which includes taking off his ring, his glasses and his silver-banded wristwatch and putting them on his desk. Next, he disappears into his private washroom. Coming out, wearing a fresh shirt, he opens the top drawer of his desk and takes out a .38-caliber revolver which he slips into a black holster on his belt. The holster has a packet of six bullets.

Riding the elevator down, he leaves the building by a back door. Accompanied by Sgt. John Devine, who acts as his chauffeur, bodyguard and confidant, Rizzo makes his way southward, toward the commercial hub of the city. On the way he is stopped by a nun, an old man and a young matron; he is approached in much the same way a famous actor or athlete might be. Graciously, he shakes hands, pats men on the back and signs autographs. His destination is the public dining room of Lit Brothers Department Store where he often stops for a noontime sandwich.

Lit Brothers is the least fashionable of the city's retail giants, with a clientele drawn largely from those who earn less than \$8,000 a year. The people who eat there are what the Commissioner likes to think of as his people—"the decent people." They are the ones who applaud him when he refuses to allow a peace demonstration in Kennedy Plaza, tries to close down a rock concert hall, attempts to

stop the showing of "I Am Curious, Yellow," or declares war on pornography by proclaiming: "As a man and a father, I find this filth absolutely disgusting. In every sex-related case, the degenerative or deviate has a lot of this material in his presence. To get any relief we will have to get a change in the make-up of the Supreme Court."

After lunch, restless at his desk, Rizzo walks around the third floor, shoving his head into executive offices, joking and talking to his virtually all-white staff. Despite the fact that the population of Philadelphia is now one-third black, only 3 out of 47 of the top brass—Deputy Commissioners, Chief Inspectors, Staff Inspectors and Inspectors — are black.

Running out of small talk, reluctant to return to his desk, the Commissioner might go to a meeting with representatives of the Secret Service and White House aides to discuss traffic control and security precautions for a visit to the city by President Nixon, or to a meeting with representatives of a regional planning group to discuss securing more Federal funds for the police. Or he might, as he did one afternoon last year, make the 10-block trip to City Hall and join the Mayor and the District Attorney in a picture-taking news session at which they all berate the judiciary for being soft on criminals.

At night he goes out to dinner with a group of male friends with whom he can relax and use salty language. One of his favorite eating spots is a private dining club with the atmosphere of a nineteen-twenties speakeasy, which he attends with sufficient regularity for the head waiter to reserve a table set for 7 every Friday evening.

At these convivial dinners, the company eats what Rizzo eats and willingly allows him to dominate the conversation. In a booming voice that carried through the restaurant one evening last fall before his resignation, he made known to all the diners his views on such luminaries as Mayor Daley ("The greatest mayor in the U.S.A."), J. Edgar Hoover ("He told me to call him anytime; he said I should just ask for the chief and I would get right through") and himself ("I'm the best — cop in America").

WHEN Rizzo began his police career in 1943 at the age of 24, the department was racked with corruption under a dying Republican city regime. Police jobs were considered political patronage, awarded only to applicants

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who had obtained the approval of their ward leader. The going rate for approval was rumored to be \$1,500.

However, Rizzo probably was not forced to pay this initiation fee, because his father, Ralph, an immigrant tailor-turned-policeman from Chiara-viale Centrale in Italy's southern region of Calabria, was a veteran officer by the time his son decided to enlist. The father, unlike the son, never rose above the rank of sergeant, and spent the last of his 41 years of service as a clarinetist in the police and fireman's band.

Describing the atmosphere of the force in the son's early days, one old-timer in the department reminisced: "The day I was sworn in they asked each of us about our last job. I said that I had worked in the Revenue Department and collected money for the state. That brought down the house. The officer in charge shouted, 'Well, boy, if you're used to collecting money you've come to the right place.'"

Between 1951 and 1962, during the tenures of reform Mayors Joseph Clark and Richardson Dilworth, drastic measures were taken to cut down on police payoffs and to professionalize the force. Dilworth installed a special police investigator in the Mayor's office. Civil Service and a merit system of employment were adopted. Cops with political connections were looked on with disfavor, and those who took the trouble to educate themselves moved into key spots. Rizzo was not one of this new breed.

During the 12-year spasm of municipal reform, while Rizzo was learning his way around, he was also making a reputation as a fearless and colorful cop.

His first press notice came a year after he joined the force, when he received severe burns putting out a fire. Seven years later he was dubbed "the Cisco Kid" after he jumped into a street fight between two gangs and ended it. In the next decade he personally thrashed policemen he discovered were on

the take, ordered Saturday night roundups of homosexuals and staged a series of dramatic raids on cafes and coffeehouses.

The coffee-shop denizens—folk singers, chess players and interracial couples—sent Rizzo's blood pressure up. He called them all "sex perverts." In 1959, reacting to a routine noise complaint, he made a number of forays into the city's half-dozen coffeehouses, claiming that they were central drug distribution points. No indictments resulted from the raids and, after an irate coffeehouse operator filed suit, the police stopped them. But not before they had made the Cisco Kid a hero to many older, staid Philadelphians.

IN August, 1955, when Rizzo was still the Cisco Kid, he was arraigned on charges of assault and battery. His accusers were five corpsmen from the Philadelphia Naval Hospital who, during a night on the town, were picked up for boisterous behavior and taken to the old 12th and Pine Street police headquarters. There, they said, they were lined up against the wall by Captain Rizzo and beaten by him with a nightstick. The case was brought before a magistrate who has since been suspended and indicted on charges of malfeasance in office. The charges against Rizzo were dismissed.

Two years later, the captain again made the newspapers after he was charged with repeatedly striking a man named Alexander Castelli with a blackjack, fracturing his jaw and blinding him in one eye. Castelli's offense had been to park illegally and refuse to move his car when asked to by Rizzo. The Commissioner frequently cites the Castelli case to prove his even-handed toughness. Castelli is white.

As recently as last June, Rizzo was again involved in an alleged case of police brutality. A man named Arthur Davis had angered an officer by refusing to show his driver's license. Davis ran away and later was trapped in the attic of his West Philadel-



HIS PEOPLE. Rizzo campaigning in Northeast Philadelphia, where he is supported by many low- and middle-income whites. He describes them as "the decent people."

phia home by policemen with drawn guns. Rizzo, hearing of the action on his radio, rushed to the scene. In a complaint Davis filed later against the Commissioner, he said that Rizzo hit him on the head with a blackjack after he was wounded and handcuffed.

Charges of police brutality have always both bewildered and enraged Rizzo. Cops, he believes, are supposed to be tough. How can they maintain order if they are not? he often asks. This attitude toward toughness is rooted in his own personal history.

HIS father ruled the home like an Old World autocrat. "My dad set tough rules and you played the game by his rules or you didn't play," Rizzo recalls. "I remember as a young man there was no question as to who was right or wrong. There were no democratic formulas. Boom, you got knocked down. It was a good system."

The toughness at home was more than matched by the roughness outside. South Rosewood Street, where Rizzo was brought up, is in the heart of "Little Italy." Then, as now, it was a neighborhood where manhood was determined by physical bravery and daring. As a teen-ager, Rizzo acquired a reputation as a tough street fighter.

The cementing force in the household was not the stern father, but the gregarious

mother, Theresa, whom Ralph Rizzo had met the first year he was walking a beat. When she died in 1938, Frank dropped out of school. Although he now likes to say he left South Philadelphia High in his senior year because he needed a job, his brother, Joseph, said Frank was just restless. "He felt that book learning was not what was needed."

Shortly after leaving school, Rizzo joined the prewar Navy, but after serving about a year was given a medical discharge because of an incipient diabetic condition. By October, 1940, he was back in Philadelphia, working as a laborer for Midvale Steel Corporation. He was promoted to machine operator, and, in 1942, married Carmella Silvestri. They have two children: Francis, 27 years old, now an employe of the Philadelphia Electric Company, and Joanna, 20, a junior at Chestnut Hill College.

Family plays a relatively small part in Frank Rizzo's life. His official biography, composed when he was appointed Commissioner, does not mention either his wife or children. When a local newspaper approached him for permission to do a woman's-page feature on his wife, Rizzo emphatically rejected the offer.

Despite the fact that his biography lists attendance at the University of Pennsyl-

vania Institute of Local and State Government in 1955, he went there largely because the department encouraged it, and his tenure as a student was brief. Testifying in front of the City Council recently on departmental policy toward officers pursuing a college degree, the Commissioner snapped, "I'm not interested in my men going to barber school."

"To understand that statement," a retired officer explained, "you have to realize that there is a deep cleavage between educated policemen and street policemen. It has existed for years. Those who have sought education see themselves as independent professionals who can transfer their skills to other departments or jobs. The street men are basically political and parochial. They see themselves as limited to Philadelphia."

"Rizzo is a street policeman. His connections were never within the department. They were always with politicians. Of course, he is a man with a lot of native intelligence. He rose through the ranks on merit. But he would never have made Deputy Commissioner, let alone Commissioner, on professional ability alone. The politicians needed an Italian. He was their Italian."

RIZZO'S spectacular rise both as a local hero and national figure did not begin until the last of the reform Mayors, Dilworth, had left office. Dilworth was succeeded by Tate, an old line pol and ward leader whose aim was not only to run the city but to control the machinery of the local Democratic party. To secure the support of key Italian figures in the party and the city's large bloc of Italian voters, Tate jumped Rizzo two ranks, over the heads of a number of other officers, to make him a Deputy Commissioner in January, 1964.

Promotion did not dampen Rizzo's appetite for action. He continued to prowl the city in pursuit of it, the more dangerous the better. This propensity earned him thousands of lines of newsprint and countless hours of TV exposure.

In the late summer of 1964 Philadelphia had a full-scale riot. Following the advice of Howard Leary, his new-breed Police Commissioner, whom he had inherited from Dilworth, Mayor Tate declared that lives took precedence over property. In the ensuing three days of looting, no shot was fired. Although liberals and blacks praised the city administration for its handling

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of the situation, many whites were openly outraged at what they considered a soft law-enforcement policy.

More to the liking of these frightened and angry whites was Rizzo's way of dealing with racial disorders.

In the summer of 1965, while cruising the city in his black car, looking for action, Rizzo intercepted a call from a popular disc jockey, George Woods. Woods had been driving down South Street—a frontier thoroughfare which separates a poor black neighborhood from a rich white one—when he spotted a gang of black boys fighting. Parking his car, he reported the incident to the police and remained on the scene waiting for them to arrive. Without warning, he suddenly found a gun pointed at his head through an open window of his car and looked up to see the Deputy Commissioner glaring at him. "Make one false move, you black son-of-a-bitch, and it'll take 36 doctors to put you back together again," Rizzo barked, according to Woods.

While other officers took care of the boys, the Deputy Commissioner kept his gun on the disc jockey. After all was calm, he allowed Woods to go.

DESPITE growing black animosity over such incidents, the Cisco Kid kept his reputation in the white community—and his post. Two years later, Mayor Tate, a weak and unpopular executive but a shrewd politician, sought reelection. It did not take him long to realize that his colorful Italian cop was a major campaign asset and in the spring of 1967 he appointed Rizzo Commissioner. Almost immediately, the new Commissioner began to dominate the local news. One photo, printed on Memorial Day, showed him rounding up a group of young blacks, another had him in a crash helmet surrounded by 500 of his men bent on breaking up a Negro demonstration against a white shopkeeper, and still a third pictured him at the head of a flying wedge of officers breaking into the ghetto headquarters of the militant Revolutionary Action Movement.

The Mayor was delighted and harped on this single municipal appointment throughout the campaign. He was reelected by a scant 11,000 votes, and the Police Commissioner was given the credit. Within weeks, there began to emerge a police position on almost every municipal issue. Quick to sense the city's leadership vacuum, Rizzo

moved in. His image of toughness, combined with the steady increase in black crimes of violence, turned him into a white folk hero.

On Nov. 17, 1967, just two weeks after the election, several thousand black students from schools all over the city gathered in front of the Board of Education to petition for black studies, more black teachers and the right to wear Afro garb to school. The demonstration had been openly planned. Board of Education members and top-echelon school administrators had worked out a scenario to handle it. They planned to meet with black youth leaders, formally accept their petition and publicly promise to consider it.

While the leaders were inside the white limestone complex, the crowd of 4,000 became restive. A few jumped on top of cars to lead songs. Rizzo, who had been warily circling the demonstration in his black sedan, took this as a signal for action and shouted, according to a Philadelphia Inquirer reporter, "Get their asses!"

Several hundred officers who had been stationed in ammunition-loaded buses on the crowd's perimeter brandished their nightsticks and charged. A miniriot ensued. The wounded were black students, a black school administrator who had been talking to the demonstrators and a score of white pedestrians several blocks away who had been roughed up by angry fleeing youths.

When the police action was denounced by Dilworth, now school board president, Rizzo demanded the right to station uniformed officers at his own discretion within the schools. The demand was rejected. School officials reported that the police then began to keep them under close surveillance. The police also infiltrated meetings between educational personnel and community leaders. These practices allegedly continued until they were reported in the press.

Rizzo, however, has continued to have influence in the public schools. Since the Nov. 17 demonstration, there has been a noticeable diminution in the efforts of the Superintendent and his staff to carry on a dialogue with black youths, who constitute 60 per cent of the city's public school enrollment.

MUCH of Rizzo's popularity with his men stems from his unflinching assault on their critics and his own. In dealing with critics, Rizzo

He boasts of having dossiers on 1,800 Philadelphians

believes, as in police work, that the best defense is a good offense.

When a columnist published an unfriendly column, for example, Rizzo sent back word to him through two reporter friends: In case of future unfriendliness, he had private and embarrassing information about the man that he just might make public.

Asked to comment on a report to the Philadelphia Bar Association that accused his department of having a cavalier attitude toward complaints of police brutality, Rizzo accused the author of the report, Prof. Louis Schwartz of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, of speaking "with a forked tongue." Rizzo said about Schwartz:

"In regard to rapists and murderers, he wants to let them out, rehabilitate them. But if a policeman fails to fill out a patrol log, he wants to execute him. It frightens me if this is what law students hear. I wish I could go to the law school and explain the other side. I wonder if Schwartz is concerned about his own profession. Does he scrutinize his own profession the way he does the police?"

When Schwartz's law students promptly invited Rizzo to explain his side to them, the Commissioner declined to appear.

Professor Schwartz was lucky; he got off with only a tongue-lashing. Floyd Patton, administrative assistant to the city's Water Commissioner, almost lost his job when he became involved with a neighborhood group that called for community control of the police and inveighed against the epidemic of gang killings in the city. Philadelphia leads the nation in these homicides and is a city which allows its Police Commissioner to dominate the gang-control program. Patton's presence at a protest meeting resulted in a job suspension and it took a court order to restore him to his duties.

One of the ways Rizzo has kept media criticism muted has been to offer special courtesies to the press lords. Walter Annenberg, the former publisher of The Philadelphia Inquirer, now United States Ambassador to England, frequently accompanied the Commis-

sioner on his nocturnal rides around the city. Rizzo sent The Philadelphia Bulletin's managing editor, George Packard, a gold police badge after that paper ran a series of articles the Commissioner liked. Packard tactfully returned the reward.

Until he became a candidate, Rizzo was always available to friendly reporters with a story and good quotes. During the primary race he has limited his press contacts, for the most part, to handing out sheets listing his closely guarded daily itinerary. Although few reporters are unnerved by the new Rizzo, The Inquirer and The Daily News have begun to criticize his silent campaign. Still, he likes most reporters personally, and the feeling is often mutual.

"Rizzo is very likable," said one City Hall newsman. "I don't support his politics, and I don't approve of all that he has done as Commissioner, but he does have a talent for friendship. He's earthy, very warm and gregarious."

Former Chief Inspector Joseph Brody, who now works in the District Attorney's office, seconded the newsman's view: "Rizzo likes people and people like Rizzo. He can be a very compassionate guy, and if he likes you, or you go to him in trouble, he'll go to hell to do you a favor or help you. But don't give him a reason to dislike you!"

RIZZO invited reporters along on his celebrated raids on Black Panther headquarters last August. He said the purpose of the raids was twofold: retaliation for the fatal shooting of a Fairmount Park guard and for the serious wounding of two police officers two days earlier in the ghetto (no connection was ever established between these incidents and Panther party members). One other possible reason for the raids was to forestall the Panther-inspired Revolutionary People's Constitution Convention, a meeting of black and white reformers and radicals that was scheduled to be held on Labor Day weekend in Philadelphia.

The papers, the TV cameras and the radio had a closeup view of the action, which included ransacking the Panther offices, ripping out the plumb-

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ing, and chopping up and carting away the furniture. Six party members were led out onto the street, stood against a wall and stripped naked as Rizzo commented, "Imagine the big Black Panthers with their pants down!"

The Mayor was ecstatic and said of his Police Commissioner, "What he has done has been positively heroic. I don't know what we would do without him."

Photographs of the naked Panthers appeared on the front pages of newspapers around the world, provoking a storm of criticism. The detailed coverage provided a banquet on which Rizzo's critics feasted. For the first time, the city's business establishment, acting under the umbrella of the Greater Philadelphia Movement and the local chapter of the prestigious Urban League, expressed opposition to Rizzo. Closely following these blasts, a Federal court, in a long-pending suit, enjoined Rizzo and his department from violating the civil rights of Philadelphians.

The suit is only one of several now in process against the former Commissioner and his department, charging them with such violations as drag-net arrests, search-and-seizure without warrants, detention of citizens without cause and excessive use of force. In an *amicus* brief filed by the Philadelphia Bar Association in one such action, the department was asked to make public its standards for police behavior. A case originated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania charges racial discrimination in police hiring. Still other suits claim deprivation of the rights of free speech and assembly.

In a series of nonstop press conferences held to defend himself against criticism after the Panther raids, Rizzo called for a "shoot-out" in the streets between black militants and the police, and labeled the Panthers "psychotics," "fanatics," "imbeciles" and "yellow dogs." At one point he said, "If we let idiots like this survive under our form of government, maybe we ought to change it."

LONG before Rizzo's candidacy for Mayor was announced, the police had become a political force. In 1969 Mayor Tate began to appoint police officers to top posts in the civilian agencies of the government. A former policeman is now Deputy Commis-

sioner of the sensitive Department of Licences and Inspection. If it had not been for a slowdown by black sanitation workers over the encroachment of the police on city government, Philadelphia would have another policeman for its Streets Commissioner.

Despite stringent Civil Service regulations, and one of the nation's most professional city personnel departments, police brass was allowed to triple. The once vocal Commission on Human Relations became silent in the face of numerous complaints of racial discrimination on the force, and of police brutality.

crime — Philadelphia's rate jumped 19 per cent between 1969 and 1970, almost twice the national rate and nearly three times the average urban increase — Rizzo responded with another attack on the judiciary. "It's the judges' fault," he said.

His supporters contend that despite the increase Philadelphia continued to have the lowest crime rate of any city in the nation during his term as Commissioner. They also point out that the city did not have a single race riot in that time.

Narcotics have received a vast amount of attention re-

traffic could not exist without police acquiescence, Rizzo continues to insist that lenient judges are to blame for the problem.

In the opinion of many observers, Rizzo has always viewed the judiciary not as an independent branch of government but as an arm of the police responsible for finding guilty those whom the police adjudge culprits, and for giving them long sentences.

One judge who has known Rizzo for more than 20 years but who refused to be identified or speak over the telephone—the fear of wiretapping is ubiquitous, though ex-

up his own mind. Usually, however, he would take into consideration the D.A.'s recommendation. Now the D.A. asks the police what they want, then, together, they pressure the judge. Today, I can tell you, anybody the police pick up and want to try is going to be tried. The police, not the judiciary, have become the sole judges of who is going to be held for court.

"The judges are afraid to defy Rizzo because Rizzo is God to the press. They are afraid of the publicity and the accusation that they are blowing out cases. . . . The most dangerous man in Philadelphia



HIS FOES. Philadelphia Panthers stand stripped in the street after a raid on their headquarters last August. Said Rizzo: "Imagine the big Black Panthers with their pants down!"

In the three years that Rizzo served, the number of policemen jumped from 6,000 to 7,200, and police appropriations increased by more than a third, from \$60-million a year to \$92-million. This increase occurred while outlays for health, recreation, welfare and sanitation services declined or remained the same. Today, the Police Department constitutes the single largest item in the city's budget.

When concern was voiced about the rising tide of violent

cently. Reporters wrote front-page stories detailing the ease with which they could buy drugs on city streets. One newsman watched a policeman lounge against his patrol car, in full view of pushers selling their wares at 10th and Fairmount in the heart of the ghetto.

Despite evidence compiled by both the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice and the Pennsylvania Crime Commission that drug

aggregated—said prior to the Commissioner's resignation:

"There is no such thing as an independent judiciary anymore. Between the pressure from the police and the D.A., who is trying to out-law-and-order Rizzo, there is no letup.

"You know we have a lower judiciary in Philadelphia. When an arrest is made, it is the job of those judges to decide if there is sufficient evidence to hold a suspect for the grand jury. The system used to be that the judge made

today is Frank Rizzo—not so much for what he is as what he symbolizes."

Rizzo has publicly bragged about having dossiers on 1,800 Philadelphians whom he considers enemies of the city and Frank Rizzo. The file does not contain the names of common criminals, but it does have information about many prominent persons.

SINCE last August, the city has been festooned with Rizzo stickers. On fall Saturday and

If Rizzo wins the primary, he probably will win in November, too

Sunday afternoons, football fans at Franklin Field were entertained by airplanes careening above with "Rizzo for Mayor" streamers. At the close of the news conference announcing his candidacy, uniformed policemen and detectives pinned on "Bank on Frank" buttons.

"The thing that's surprising about Rizzo is that he is running as a Democrat," said local political pollster Harry Rivkin. "Rizzo does have a large following, but it is substantially greater among Republicans than Democrats. The significant voting blocs within the local Democratic party are Negroes, Irish, Poles, Italians and Jews, and a mixture of Germans and Anglo-Saxons. Polls show that very large numbers of blacks and Jews won't vote for Rizzo, and there is significant resistance to his candidacy among the other Democrats. He has the disapproval of more than half of the city's Democratic voters. Clearly he is not a natural candidate for that party. He polarizes the voters. Worse than that, he insults the largest single bloc of loyal Democrats in the city—the blacks."

The fragmenting effect on the party of Rizzo's candidacy can be seen by his primary opponents, a black, first-term state legislator, Hardy Williams, and a young, five-term, Irish-Catholic Congressman, William J. Green. A third candidate, City Councilman David Cohen, dropped out toward the end in favor of Green, and there was pressure on Williams to do the same.

Veteran politicians acknowledge that only one of the two anti-Rizzo candidates has city-wide support and a chance to win, Congressman Green, a dove with impeccable liberal credentials and a well-articulated position against machine politics. Ironically, Green is the son of Philadelphia's most successful political boss, the late William J. Green, and loyalty to the father could deliver some of the regular organization support that Rizzo is counting on to the son. Green's ethnic background, in a city with a Democratic registration that is a quarter Irish Catholic, could counter Rizzo's ethnic pull with Italians. The Congressman's record should also win him support among liberals. However, the

defection of some Rizzo blacks to State Representative Williams, combined with the obvious popularity of the former Commissioner in some Democratic circles, could well deliver the nomination to Rizzo.

Although Rizzo claimed when he announced his mayoral bid that he was not a "polarizing" candidate, his workers tell another story. Circulating through the white crowd in the parking lot of Sears Roebuck's store in Northeast Philadelphia one balmy Saturday afternoon in April, a Rizzo aide kept impressing on the voters, "If it weren't for Rizzo, the Zulus would be running the city."

When Mrs. Sylvia Casper, a white housewife, asked a Rizzo worker about the former Commissioner's stand on drugs, the reply was, "You want the niggers to run the country?" It was the only answer Mrs. Casper ever received.

IF Frank Rizzo should defeat William Green in the primary and win the Democratic nomination for Mayor, he would probably win in November, too. In a general election, his natural support among conservative voters, many of them Republicans, would have much greater effect. In such an event, many fear he will change the political direction of the nation's fourth most populous city away from any pretense of seeking positive answers to urban problems—and steer it instead toward police solutions.

The paradox of Frank Rizzo's rise to power exemplifies the American dilemma. Caught in an era of rapid change and vast social discontent, trapped in an ever more rigid economic system, the lower middle-class American longs for a safer, saner world—the old world in which his hard work and strict code of personal behavior were rewarded. Instead, he is greeted by the angry violence of the poor black underclass, and the cries of injustice of the rich white overclass. Seeking redress, he has made a hero of the tough cop—in Philadelphia, at least—and allows his hero to exorcise his fears and frustrations by acting out his own turbulent fantasies. ■