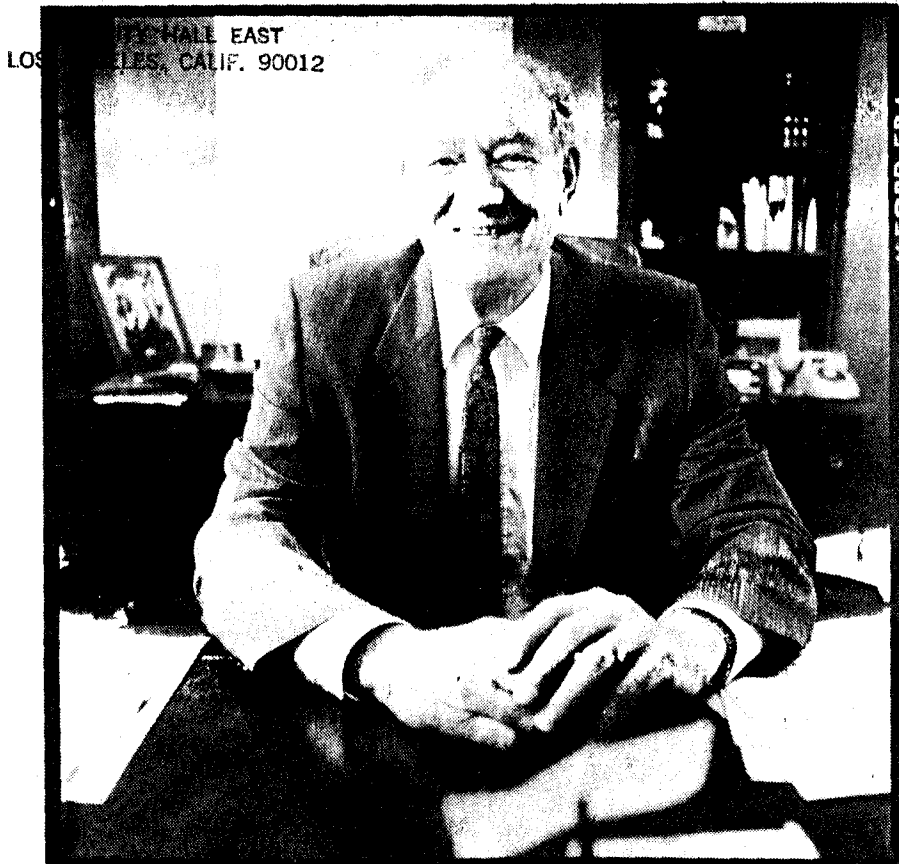


SEP 06 1989

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"Tom Bradley did a decent job at first, but I think he stayed in too long."

## JOHN FERRARO ON DECK

*The man who would be acting mayor*

BY LAUREEN LAZAROVICI AND HAROLD MEYERSON

**S**hould Tom Bradley resign, Los Angeles' new mayor will be John Ferraro.

The city charter stipulates that in the event of a resignation, the City Council president becomes acting mayor either until a special election is called or until the next regularly scheduled municipal election (see accompanying story on election laws). As council president, John Ferraro, a 23-year council veteran whose district stretches from Hancock Park to Studio City, could be slated to run the city until the subsequent election.

Ferraro, 64, is a product of the old guard of conservative if nominally Democratic pol-

subsequent 13 years, overseeing the controversial tenure of Chief William Parker, who ran what was widely regarded as one of the most honest — and in the assessment of critics, one of the most brutal and racist — police departments in the nation. During the '50s, Ferraro also was active in the Democratic Associates, a group of centrist Democrats opposed to the growing efforts of more liberal Adlai Stevenson backers in the party.

In 1985, Ferraro challenged Tom Bradley for mayor. Fresh from the triumph of the 1984 Olympics (which Ferraro also played a role in landing), immune as yet from the rising public discontent with the quality of L.A. life, Bradley was invulnerable. Ferraro swore off any further mayoral aspirations. His elevation to the position of acting mayor is not the likeliest scenario — but it has clearly moved beyond a mere academic possibility.

John Ferraro was interviewed by Laureen Lazarovici and Harold Meyerson on August 2.

**Q:** Who would be a model mayor?

**A:** Mayor Daley. He was a tough old guy and he got things done. I think Ed Koch did an admirable job at first. Sam Yorty did a good job.

iticians who used to dominate local politics. At the behest of then-Mayor Sam Yorty, he was appointed to the Council in 1966 to fill the unexpired balance of his predecessor's term.

An All-American USC football hero in the mid-'40s, Ferraro first entered government in 1953, when Mayor Norris Poulson appointed him to the city's police commission. He served on the commission for the

**WEEKLY:** There is the possibility that you might be acting mayor of L.A., and people don't know a lot about you.

**FERRARO:** I've been here all my life.

**WEEKLY:** How has the city changed? What's better and what's worse since you played football at SC?

**FERRARO:** What's worse is the traffic and the development. Los Angeles has gotten to be a tremendously big city, with all of its problems and with all of its advantages. You know, as long as the city's growing,

## BRADLEY AND THE THREE R's

**S**hould Mayor Tom Bradley's troubles deepen, there are several scenarios under which his tenure as mayor could come to an abrupt end. These include removal, resignation and recall.

The mayor cannot be "impeached" in the same way presidents can be. However, the city charter provides that his office is considered vacant if he is convicted of a felony or "of an offense involving a violation of his official duties." (Since there is no list of "official duties," this section suggests that Bradley would have to be convicted of a crime to be removed.) Additionally, if Bradley were to be tried for any offense, the City Council could suspend him.

If the mayor resigns, the City Council must swing into action. The council president, John Ferraro, automatically becomes acting mayor. After that, the City Council has two options. First, it can appoint an interim mayor for the rest of the unexpired term until the next June 30 of an odd-numbered year. If Bradley were to resign any time soon, under this option the interim mayor would be in power until June 1991. The council then has to call a special election to fill the vacancy for the remainder of Bradley's term (which expires June 1993).

The council can appoint anyone it wants as interim mayor; however, a quirky section of the city charter states that members of the City Council, during the term for which they were elected, cannot be appointed to any position that requires council approval (which the mayor's office does). So even if a council member who wanted to be appointed interim mayor resigned, it is unclear whether he or she could be appointed. The more likely scenario is that Ferraro would continue to

serve as the acting mayor.

The City Council's second option would be to call for a special election immediately. This special election would have to be timed to coincide with other upcoming elections. The next election coming up is in June 1990, when primaries for statewide officers, congressional representatives and other positions will be held. The general election for these offices is November 1990. And in April and June 1991, half of the City Council seats will be up for grabs. So, depending on the timing of Bradley's hypothetical resignation, a special election for mayor could be held at any of these times.

The citizens of Los Angeles could also initiate a recall of the mayor any time after Oct. 1. Petitioners have to collect signatures of 15 percent of the number of registered voters in Los Angeles. Today, that means at least 280,000 signatures. (Only 334,764 people voted in the mayor's race last April.) These signatures have to be collected within four months.

Once the city clerk certifies the petition, the council must schedule a special election within two to three months. The ballot must include both the question of recall and choices for a new mayor should the recall win a majority of votes. If the recall gets a majority, then the votes for a successor are counted. If no candidate gets a majority of the votes, the City Council has to call a runoff between the two top vote-getters. This runoff must be held between two and four months after the recall election.

All told, it would take about seven months to a year for a recall drive to work its way through the system.

—Laureen Lazarovici

### FERRARO

there's prosperity. But if the city starts to die, it's like a vine on a tree. If a vine starts dying, it withers away. And I know there are those who want the city to wither away. But they don't look at the whole picture like we have to look at the whole picture. Like it or not, we're at the center of an area that's going to be growing for some time, and we've got to be careful about how we manage that growth. **WEEKLY:** You were one of the six votes that was in favor of a council takeover of Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) affairs. What is it about the CRA that has led you to reach that conclusion?

**FERRARO:** Well, I think they operate in a vacuum. They do things and then they come here at the last minute and we have to more or less rubber-stamp it. I don't know if the council is the best body to give that full responsibility to. But letting them know that there are some critics is a good thing. You know, there's a certain arrogance that's permeated the CRA.

**WEEKLY:** One of the things that the mayor's office has sent to the council is a proposal re-

garding linkage fees, a certain number of dollars per square foot that developers must pay when they erect a building. Is it a sound policy?

**FERRARO:** Yes, I think it is. You know, we're going to have more of that. We also put a linkage on the development of arts. Either developers put a certain amount of the building for art or they put it into a fund and we administer it. And I think those things are important.

**WEEKLY:** What are your thoughts on L.A.'s air quality or lack thereof? The Air Quality Management District and Southern California Association of Governments have come up with very ambitious plans and it's unclear who exactly would be paying the costs of cleaning up L.A.'s air. Some people have been saying that small business and industries employing a lot of minorities might be bearing the brunt of it.

**FERRARO:** Well, I think there are things we have to do for air quality, or we might create an area that is unlivable if we're not careful. And I think we've done a lot of things that I don't know if we've gotten credit for. It would have been unlivable if

considerably more complex than those that faced Debs and Thomas. Like them, he flayed the existing order, presented alternatives; but having taken his listeners on a journey outside the system, he then brought them back inside the world that must be changed.

It was a complicated maneuver; in the history of American socialism, a new maneuver. In the fragmented post-Vietnam Left, Harrington was the first to try to reassemble a progressive coalition. The Democratic Party, he said on campus after campus, was his Archimedean point, where the Left could stand with the lever of coalition politics and move the world.

The labor movement, he told middle-class reformers in meeting after meeting, was the indispensable component of any progressive politics. Coalition politics, he told union convention after union convention (his voice crackling like a wake-up call in the middle of a sleepy afternoon's proceedings), was inescapable in postwar America. Either we work in coalition for a more democratic economy and society, he said, or we work in vain.

These were arguments that Harrington largely won. Coalition politics have become a commonplace of the Left. The question of party has become less vexing: when a genuine Left candidacy presented itself last year in Jesse Jackson's White House bid, Left activists and intellectuals

from across the country joined the campaign. And over the past 15 years, the Democratic Socialists of America, saved from the Left's traditional purity and irrelevance, grew to become the largest American democratic socialist organization since the '30s.

Which wasn't all that large — 6,000 members nationally. No one ever had to convince Mike how marginal American socialism was — at DSOC's founding, he called the organization "a defeated remnant of a defeated remnant." Socialism, Mike insisted, had long since ceased to be inevitable. It was merely necessary. "The fundamental truth of these times is radical," he once wrote. "It is not my use of the word *socialism* that creates problems

for me. It is that the word asserts the need for a systemic and international transformation if humankind is to live in freedom in the 21st century. The utopians, in the negative sense of that term, are the pragmatists who mystically believe that society can survive political, economic, social and military upheavals — can cope with what is a transition to a new civilization — by squatting in the middle of the road."

**N**or did Mike consider socialism an unproblematic ideal. It had been drenched in blood by Stalinist pretenders, he argued, and reduced to a visionless incrementalism by a number of postwar social democrats. Through his writing and his work in the Socialist International, Mike helped turn the socialist movement in the industrial West toward the nations and parties of the Third World, toward newer reform movements and classes with which at home a dwindling industrial proletariat had to make common cause, to a politics that did battle with transnational capitalism over the global ecology. Irving Howe was alluding to this dimension of Mike's work when he wrote that Harrington's influence will "affect thousands who will never know his name."

The '80s, not surprisingly, have been a slow time for American socialism. Democratic socialism may be the banner under which Chinese students parade, and Soviet reformers may look wistfully to the Swedish model, but the last decade in America has seen the mainstream Left struggling merely to preserve the gains of the '60s — and the '30s. Mike's response was simply to work himself harder — book after book, speech after speech — to engage and dispel the policy assumptions of a mean time. On the day his doctors told him he had inoperable cancer of the esophagus and only several months to live, he began work on the book that was to become his final and greatest reformulation of the socialist project, his summa theologica, *Socialism: Past & Future*. Medical science and sheer will saw him through from its conception to its publication last month.

Those who had sympathy with Harrington's ideals — and even some who did not — could not spend any time with him without coming away thinking that this was a world leader put down in the wrong time and place: imagine Trotsky spending his entire career in Utah. Mike bore his own marginality (though not socialism's) with a mixture of good humor and mild exasperation. He had a gift for companionship that is not a common characteristic of leaders on the left, center, or right.

His gift for leadership proved rarer, I think, than he imagined. Ours is a society that winnows talent into narrow specialties, that segregates passion from policy, the moral impulse from the analytical, the world of ideas from the world of action. Mike transcended all these divisions. The same urgency that led him to abandon Yale Law School for the voluntary poverty of the Catholic Worker movement on the Bowery, the same rage at remediable evil that led him to an obscure socialist sect in the early '50s, was there in later years in his work on macroeconomics, in his congressional testimony, in his speeches to students and to unionists. His was probably the foremost intelligence in postwar America to hurl itself unrelentingly against the established order. In a society that fragments and thwarts its critics, he was, against all odds, a great man — certainly the only one I have ever known, likely the only one I ever will. **LA**

**FERRARO**

we hadn't done them. But we've got to be practical. The ultimate payer of all these things is going to be the consumer, the people. If business has to pay more, they're going to charge more. And I hope that not a lot of small businesses will fall by the wayside because of the restrictions that are put on them.

**WEEKLY:** *Yesterday there was a vote regarding Metro Rail. What is your long-term view about transportation?*

**FERRARO:** One of the big secrets is that four years ago, I ran for mayor. I proposed that we build a light rail along the freeway corridor, saying we could not afford to go underground. And when we had that debate yesterday, I just politely said, "I don't want to say I told you so," but I knew that there would be huge overruns. I'm sure the first four miles will not be effective. For the amount we were spending on the four miles, I predicted we could build a light rail out to the Hollywood Freeway, the Ventura Freeway past the San Diego Freeway, from the San Diego Freeway north to the Ventura Freeway, past the Century Freeway, where you would

**Q:** **If Bradley were to go, would Acting Mayor Ferraro seek to become Mayor Ferraro?**

**A:** **I tried that once, and I wasn't very successful at it. I have no intention of running for mayor.**

have the Century rail line. You could also go down the Santa Monica Freeway to the Harbor Freeway, the Harbor to downtown, and connect that circle. It would have been the equivalent to what you were paying for four miles. When I was proposing this, the railroad lines through the Valley were not available. They are now available. I'd think we'd be silly not to take advantage of those railroad lines.

**WEEKLY:** *Mike Woo's committee is looking at some ethics reforms. Are there any changes you'd like to see in regard to codes for elected officials in L.A.?*

**FERRARO:** I, together with Mike Woo and Marvin Braude, brought in a proposal that was pretty tough. Somewhere between what we proposed and what we have now is what we should adopt, [including] limits on campaign funds, no outside employment, limited gifts. There are those who feel there shouldn't be any gifts; there are those who feel there should be a minimum amount. I'd hate there to be a rule that there be no gifts and then somebody gives you a stick of gum sometime. Are you guilty of an infraction? There would be no ability to lobby until you've been out of city government for a certain amount of time, a year or so. But there's always the other side you have to look at. We are losing employees right now because they are afraid that if that rule goes into effect they will not be able to do the work that they are specialized in, because they wouldn't be able to work in planning or whatever the case may be for a period of time. So they are leaving now. And that's one of the dangers.

**WEEKLY:** *Is there any mayor in the U.S. today or in the past who would be a terrific model?*

**FERRARO:** You know, Mayor Daley was a tough old guy and he got things done. And some people criticized the way he did

**FERRARO**

them. I think Koch did an admirable job at first. I think like a lot of people, he's been in too long. And Tom Bradley did a decent job at first, but I think he stayed in too long — I think he shouldn't have run the last time when I ran. But there's been a lot of mayors. Sam Yorty did a good job. He had a fight with the *Times* and never got any credit for what he did, but he built the zoo, he built the Convention Center. These were big things. Can Tom Bradley talk about anything he did, other than expand the airport, expand the harbor, expand the Convention Center?

**WEEKLY:** *You were active in partisan Democratic politics around Jack Kennedy for some time and less so lately. Where are you in terms of your sympathies and activities regarding national politics?*

**FERRARO:** During the Kennedy campaign I was executive director of the Volunteers for Kennedy — unpaid volunteers. I was a delegate to Carter's re-election campaign. I was an alternate delegate for Johnson. I think a lot of the structure of the Democratic Party now has gotten much younger and they look at me as an old dinosaur. I didn't have one person from the Dukakis campaign call me, and I was president of the City Council.

**WEEKLY:** *If they had called . . .*

**FERRARO:** I might have gotten active. They knew where I was.

**WEEKLY:** *Before you were on the council, you were on the police commission, when Parker was chief. What was your take on Parker and some of the chiefs that succeeded him?*

**FERRARO:** Parker was the model. He was always really sharp, really professional, very committed to honest law enforcement. I knew Daryl Gates when he used to drive for Bill Parker, which was not what you'd normally think of as a chauffeur. That's a plum job, because you're with the chief, you get to talk to him, you get his ideas, you know what he's doing, you learn very well. Daryl learned very well. One day, Bill told me Daryl should be chief someday.

**WEEKLY:** *Parker got a lot of criticism from a lot of minority communities here. In hindsight, what do you think of that?*

**FERRARO:** Well, Bill Parker was very pro-law enforcement, very pro-law. If someone violated the law, he didn't care if they were white, black, whatever, he would not tolerate people breaking the law. And that was misinterpreted by a lot of people. But he was as non-racist as you could find. I knew him well.

**WEEKLY:** *Are there restrictions that the police operate under that you think are a problem?*

**FERRARO:** They can't just go knock somebody's door down. In the old days, I remember, if you saw a group of kids standing on a corner, you could go find out what they were up to. Now, you can't do that unless you have cause to believe that they're doing something illegal. Maybe that's good, I don't know. But I know there's greater crime and greater gang warfare.

**WEEKLY:** *If Bradley were to go, would Acting Mayor John Ferraro seek to become Mayor John Ferraro?*

**FERRARO:** I tried that once, and I wasn't very successful at it.

**WEEKLY:** *Is that a blanket, "Sherman"-like . . .?*

**FERRARO:** No, it's not "Sherman"-like, but I have no intention of running for mayor. I did that once. Now, if everybody clamored for John Ferraro to run for mayor, you'd have to give it some thought. But I don't see that. **GA**

# Ferraro in Council Job, Tells Aims

HERALD-EXAMINER

MAY 25 '68

By AL BINE

Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

Big John Ferraro today starts running interference for more than 250,000 residents of the fourth Los Angeles councilmanic district.

Running in front of someone is nothing new for the former, two-time (1944-1947) University of Southern California All-American tackle.

The massive (6-foot-4½ inch, 245 pound) native son was appointed yesterday to an interim position on the City Council from a field of 13 volunteers, to fill the vacancy created by the death last May 1 of Harold Henry.

A resident of the district for 18 years, along with his wife, the former Julie Marie Luckey, Ferraro has no illusions about his new political appointment.

## ASKED CONSIDERATION

"Yes, I submitted a letter requesting consideration," he said while adjusting himself into a plush, leather rocking chair in his new office. "I've got ambition and always have wanted to improve myself.

"I've got some pre-conceived ideas about this job, although I'm certain some, perhaps many of them will be changed.

"But I've always been interested in public affairs and have been involved in community service since my days in college."



MAY 25 '68-Herald-Examiner Photo

JOHN FERRARO

New City Councilman

HERALD-EXAMINER

Biography - F

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a public servant will soar from \$10 per commission meeting to an annual stipend of \$17,000.

As he fiddled with push-button telephone to accept congratulations from well-wishers, the handsome, black-haired legislator admitted he'd had prior thoughts about politics.

**"For a time," he said, "I considered becoming a candidate either for State Senator or Secretary of State."**

Active in Democratic campaigns since graduation from USC in 1947, Ferraro first earned public recognition in 1941 when he was unanimous choice on the All-City football team at Bell High School.

For the past 15 years he has operated his own insurance brokerage and has been extremely active in club, civic and community activities.

A member of the Los Angeles Police Commission since his appointment in 1953 by former mayor Norris Poulson, Ferraro yesterday submitted his resignation, personally, to Police Chief William Parker, after three terms as president of the Police Commission.

His salary, incidentally, as



**JOHN FERRARO**, 46. Police commissioner from 1953-66. Appointed to council in 1966, elected in 1967. All-American football player and track star at USC. Tall, and likes to think people refer to him fondly as "Big John." Few do. Tough on law and order. One of least colorful men on council. Occasional flashes of temper.

LOS-ANGELES  
APRIL 1970



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LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90012

BIOGRAPHY

John Ferraro  
Councilman, 4th District

John Ferraro was born in Los Angeles County on May 14, 1924. He attended Los Angeles public schools and the University of Southern California, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. While attending USC, he was named to the All-American Football Team in 1944 and 1947. He enlisted in the U. S. Naval ROTC in 1942 and was commissioned as an Ensign in 1945.

He is married to the former Julie Marie Luckey. They have one son, Luckeygian, age 15. He has been an insurance broker with his own Wilshire District firm, the John Ferraro Company, since 1951.

From 1953 until he became a member of the Los Angeles City Council (May, 1966) he served as Police Commissioner for the City of Los Angeles and was its President three times. In May of 1967 he was elected to the City Council for a full four-year term.

On the City Council he serves as Chairman of the Industry and Transportation Committee; Vice Chairman, Charter and Administrative Code Committee; Member of the Recreation and Parks Committee and the Board of Referred Powers.

He is President of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum Commission, and is serving on the Mayor's Transportation Advisory Committee and on the Committee on Public Safety for the League of California Cities.

He is a member of the Wilshire Center Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts of America, Wilshire YMCA, Friends of Youth, American Legion, American Parkinson Disease Foundation, and Board of Directors of St. Anne's Foundation.