

Board. For such service all that is required is a telephone call to our agency. There has never been a time when the public members of the Board and the Superintendent of Recreation were not available to service demonstrated needs with interest, determination, and with immediate response.

I can recall only one instance in which the Recreation Board has differed with Commissioner Washington (never with the former Board of Commissioners) and this was a situation not too long ago when a militant rally was to be scheduled in Georgetown. It was publicly reported that Commissioner Washington expressed concern because of community tensions. The Recreation Board, with one dissenting vote, did not accept that expressed concern, not only by the Commissioner but also by one member of the City Council who likewise had reservations about what might occur at the time. Fortunately, there was no incident because the 7th precinct of the Metropolitan Police Department and the local citizens took extensive precautions to forestall any consideration of disorder which might have occurred.

What I think is needed here, Mr. Chairman, is a strengthening of the Recreation Board, an acceptance and a recognition by the District Building and all agencies who have some interest in recreation to be fully cognizant of the fact that the Recreation Board is charged with responsibility by congressional act, has the responsibility to develop and administer the Arts and Cultural service programs in the District of Columbia within the framework of its mandate. Further the Recreation Board is one of the agencies with ex officio representation under the act establishing the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The Congress might wish to (and I would suggest) examine the effectiveness of the leadership and the discharge of agency responsibilities within the range that those responsibilities can be met. And this, obviously, relates to the qualifications of the members of the Recreation Board, the ability and leadership of management, the qualifications of Civil Service personnel, and the funding.

The heart of the whole problem, as in many programs of the District of Columbia and indeed programs everywhere, involves public appropriation, because the public appropriation to a large extent governs policy, service, and staff quality.

This, I think, is the core situation. The appropriation process, for the most part, evolves in the District Building through the Office of the Budget Director. From that office it becomes the Commissioner's budget to the President, and the President's budget to the Congress for the District of Columbia. It is my observation that over the years, in light of the financial circumstances which prevail in the District, that the Recreation Board has been reasonably well treated when measured against the treatment of other agencies. Recreation is a big business now, and certainly must ask for and receive increased appropriations to provide services to a changing community which is demanding more and more. The judgment and consideration of the Congress, I think, over the years in light of the funding possibilities in the District has been reasonably generous to our agency.

The Recreation Board has many ties with the citizenry of the District of Columbia. The Board is dependent in large measure for support by volunteer groups. Many volunteer groups are closely related to the Board in providing service to all segments and sections of the