

Finally, Mr. Chairman, and at the risk of stressing this point too much—but this I think is one of the main reasons why a lot of us had concern as to the relationship between the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Chief of Police—I wish to refer to the recent incident in which you criticized the Chief of Police. You explained very clearly, I believe, in answer to the Chairman's question, that you are in communication with the Chief of Police and that you feel that these things should not be tried through the newspapers. But it must have been rather humiliating for the Chief when he was very severely criticized in the press for not having reported the incident of the police officers firing their guns while under the influence of alcohol that Friday night; and then immediately following that—despite your statement to Mr. Whitener that you believe in the chain of command, so to speak—you made the public announcement of a subordinate to Chief Layton without his having the courtesy or the privilege of making the announcement himself. Now, these two events following in close succession did indicate to the public that Chief Layton was being bypassed, or in effect that he was being demoted.

He would not publicly say that, of course, but it caused the public and certainly many members of this Committee to feel, Mr. Murphy, that Chief Layton was just being cast aside, or demoted into an ineffectual figurehead, and that you were going over his head in the re-organization program of the police department. And this, I am told, has affected morale somewhat. You said it has not, and I am not challenging the accuracy of your statement. But we have received reports from some members of the police department that they are quite upset about this now. Now, whether this situation has been exaggerated to us or not—it might be questionable these members are very much concerned with that impression that has been given.

Now, you stated very emphatically here this morning that you believe in the chain of command, and that Chief Layton should be properly consulted, but it certainly seems that if this announcement had been made by Chief Layton, this unfortunate situation could have been avoided.

That is all, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Fuqua.

Mr. FUQUA. Mr. Murphy, first of all, let me say that I have no question about the creation of your office, nor as to your appointment. This is something that Mayor Washington deemed appropriate, and I support him in this matter. But I have been concerned, and without sounding like a broken record, with some of the actions that have been mentioned here this morning. I think that there should be a clarification of who actually is in charge of running the day-to-day operations of the police department. Now, as I understand you to say, this is still Chief Layton.

Mr. MURPHY. Yes, sir.

Mr. FUQUA. I think one of the worst things that could happen to morale or the effectiveness of the Metropolitan Police Department is for the man on the beat not to know whom he should answer to or whom his superior is. I do not think that we should create within the police department so-called "Layton men" and so-called "Murphy men." I think this would have a great deal of serious effect on the morale of the police department.