

MORALE CITED

Murphy said he has heard complaints about morale problems on the force since taking over his job but said he didn't think the Wilson appointment would make the problem more serious.

Murphy said Wilson's appointment was the first of a series he will make in coming weeks to build in the department "a team of top-level officials" to carry out reorganization plans.

The safety director said he will name an assistant chief in charge of the Administrative Services Bureau, a deputy chief to head the Special Operations Division and about five inspectors.

He said it is possible civilians might be named to one or more of the positions.

During the 20-minute closed meeting with Layton, Wilson and other high officers of the department, Murphy said he wanted it fully understood that from now on he would be running the department.

"I want your support, I know you can make or break me," Murphy said, according to sources at the meeting.

They said that the news of Wilson's appointment had come as a surprise to Layton, who sat stone-faced throughout Murphy's talk. He had heard of the move only shortly before the meeting.

Murphy reportedly said he would begin a general shift of personnel in an attempt to move "hotheads" out of ghetto area precincts. He also promised a shakeup in the Community Relations division, sources said.

Referring to Friday's incident involving four off-duty officers in a shooting spree, Murphy told the officers he resented not being notified immediately. "Those things that I should know I want to be called on," Murphy reportedly said.

Afterwards, he told a reporter, "This is something I have had in mind for a long time." He said his new role in running the department was not related to the shooting incident.

Wilson, an 18-year veteran of the department, will take command of units comprising most of its forces, including the following divisions: Patrol, Criminal investigation, Traffic, Youth and Special Operations. Field operations includes 2,854 of the assigned 3,384 positions in the department.

Murphy said he made the appointment of Wilson yesterday to begin phasing Covell out of his dual role before his retirement.

APPOINTED BY LAYTON

Wilson has been director of the Planning and Development Division. Appointed by Layton, he has done much of the groundwork for the reorganization of the department as recommended by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

He was born in Virginia and raised in Belmont, N.C. A specialist in statistics and budgeting matters, Wilson speaks with a soft, Southern accent. He joined the force in 1949 after serving in the Marine Corps.

He was transferred from the 7th Precinct to police headquarters in 1951 and served in a variety of clerical and staff functions. He was appointed a lieutenant in 1960, a captain in 1961, an inspector in 1964 and a deputy chief on December 18, 1966.

Murphy said he expected Wilson to concentrate on three areas: implementing recommendations of the D.C. Crime Commission, intensifying police-community relations efforts and instilling a feeling in subordinates that they will have strong backing from the new District government when they perform their work "professionally."

ON FORCE 36 YEARS

Covell, 63, is a 36-year veteran of the force. He was born and reared in Baltimore. He came to Washington in 1929 to become a machinist at the Naval Gun Factory.

In 1931, he started his career as a patrolman in the 5th Precinct. He was promoted to lieutenant in 1945 and captain in 1948.

As commanding officer of the 1st Precinct, Covell cracked down on gambling and liquor clubs and gained his reputation as a tough, "gentleman cop."

He was named an inspector in August 1951 and four months later was promoted to deputy chief and named executive officer of the department, next in command under the chief.

The position, which he still holds, will be abolished when he retires, as part of the recommendations of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Yesterday, Murphy received a telegram from the predominantly white D.C. Police Wives Association, complaining of "his newspaper tirades" over the