Chairman Thomas and his Board. They have, in my opinion, functioned in an outstanding manner against very, very difficult circumstances. I believe that for too many years they have had to try to develop a recreation program which has been neglected, underbudgeted, understaffed and undernourished, and I believe that we are taking an appropriate step now to put the recreation program and the organization into tandem with the District's resources. I would hope that this action would give the city a far more viable program in the future.

With respect to the reorganization proposal specifically, at present the District of Columbia Recreation Department is not an integral part of the District government. Mr. Chairman, I think we have introduced the organization chart, and with your permission, I would like to have it made a part of the record. It may provide some answers just by looking at it.

Mr. BLATNIK. Without objection, the chart will follow the actual text of your statement which will appear in the record.

Commissioner WASHINGTON. Thank you, sir. As I indicated, the Department has not been an integral part of the government. Instead, it operates under an independent seven-member board. The reorganization plan would abolish the Board of Recreation and transfer its functions, with those of the Superintendent of Recreation, to the District of Columbia Commissioner.

Like urban renewal, recreation is a vital and integral element of the city's life. It is closely related to health, education, child care, delinquency prevention, vocational rehabilitation, and conservation. It is a key element in the city's school enrichment activities, its urban renewal and model city programs, and its summer youth programs.

The present autonomy of the Recreation Department prevents the District of Columbia Commissioner from achieving the necessary coordination of recreation programs with the other closely related District programs. And I again refer to that chart, Mr. Chairman, and I think that it—I don't want to belabor it—but I think you get a little feel of what we are faced with in trying to function as a government with a maze of interdependent and unrelated agencies and activities.

There should be no distinction in my belief between recreation and other community service programs now under the policy supervision of my office. Last year's Reorganization Plan No. 3 had as fundamental objectives the unification of executive and administrative authority, the elimination of competing and sometimes conflicting assignments or responsibility, and organization of the District government under a single Commissioner to provide effective day-to-day administration. Both of these 1968 reorganization plans will further those objectives and permit the District government to function more effectively in meeting the needs of the community.

Last fall, I called in nationally known authorities on urban affairs to advise our new administration. These experts, operating through five work groups, stressed the urgent need for greater integration of various municipal activities under the policy supervision of the Commissioner. Two of the groups specifically addressed themselves to the need for a closer relationship of urban renewal and recreation, both