

Mr. Chairman, that I think we owe a debt of gratitude to my predecessor in this office, Paul Douglas, for pioneering for so many years an attempt to have more full disclosure of the costs of borrowing money. I think it is a tribute to Senator Douglas that this persistence has now helped us bring the Federal law before the Senate and the House. I think it is particularly pertinent, as we are dealing this morning with a crime-on-the-streets bill, that we have before us this morning one of the ablest witnesses in the United States, and one of the great experts in this field.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Percy, for that moving statement. We will be delighted to hear from this witness.

Mr. Siragusa.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES SIRAGUSA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ILLINOIS CRIME INVESTIGATING COMMISSION, CHICAGO, ILL.

Mr. SIRAGUSA. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Illinois Crime Investigating Commission, we wish to compliment this committee very much for conducting what we believe to be the first nationwide exposé of the degrading, highly profitable, and economically debilitating crime of criminal usury. I am so concerned about this problem, and have been so involved for the past several years, that I am now in the process of writing a comprehensive nonfiction book on the subject.

Consequently, I am very honored that you invited me here today to participate in these hearings.

The Illinois Crime Commission Act was adopted by the General Assembly in Illinois in 1963. We did not become operational until December of that year, when I was appointed its first executive director.

Ours is a bipartisan commission, composed of four State senators, and four State representatives, appointed by the majority and minority leaders of both houses. The Governor appointed four public members.

We have two cochairmen, one from each political party.

As executive director, I have the responsibility of the day-to-day supervision of 15 investigators, a counsel, and an auditor.

Our act specifically recognized the influence of organized crime in the frequent subversion of governmental, political, and economic institutions within Illinois.

The act clearly defined our mandates:

- (1) To investigate organized crime and establish the facts and general background relating thereto,
- (2) To investigate individual crimes having any bearing on organized crime.
- (3) To investigate the connection of organized crime and politics, and
- (4) The connection with legitimate business.

In this context it is our obligation to protect the public safety, public peace, public health, public morale, public welfare, and public justice of the State of Illinois through the statewide investigation of organized crime.