

Mr. MURPHY. The message that I participated in, Congressman, was something like this, as best I recall it, where at 14th and U—we were having rocks and bottles thrown at us, and there were hundreds of people in the streets, and windows are breaking, what should we do?

My best recollection of my response was, "If your safety is in danger, leave there."

And then I sent a message to rendezvous with me a block away. I don't recall ever hearing the language you quote.

Mr. HARSHA. Well, let me quote: "Surrounded by mob of about 50 people, what do we do? They are rioting. Do we arrest them or leave?"

Mr. MURPHY. I do not recall hearing that transmission, sir.

Mr. HARSHA. In substance, it is about what you heard, though, isn't it?

Mr. MURPHY. Well, the officer sought direction about whether to try to hold that corner or leave it and regroup, and I directed, in effect, to regroup and come out.

Mr. HARSHA. My point is this: The police officers were not prepared for any eventuality. They were not instructed as to what to do in a situation of that kind, were they?

Mr. MURPHY. I think, sir, the officers in this Department are well instructed. Some of the situations that develop are extremely difficult and the decisions that an officer had to make are extremely difficult ones. He is overwhelmed by numbers. It is awfully difficult to predict how human beings will react.

Mr. HARSHA. I understand that. But the fact is that you assured this Committee that you were prepared for any eventuality. Those are your words. And you just assured us now that you are ready for any eventuality in the future. That is a broad statement to make, and it is quite possible that you still aren't prepared for any eventuality.

Mr. MURPHY. Well, they have received much instruction, sir. That was a poor statement. I should have qualified that by adding, "within our resources and within the limitations of the judgment and discipline and control of our officers," all of which are factors that are not easy factors.

Mr. HARSHA. Well, I couldn't agree with you there. I just have one other question.

I believe you said that you were disturbed about the recent riots?

Mr. MURPHY. Yes, sir.

Mr. HARSHA. You also made the statement, I believe, that you were disturbed about the losses you foresee in the days ahead?

Mr. MURPHY. I don't foresee losses. I said I am disturbed about the possibility. I am concerned about the possibility of the problems that face us in the days ahead.

Mr. HARSHA. What are these possibilities that you foresee?

Mr. MURPHY. Well, the Department could possibly be very much taxed in the next few weeks in policing demonstrations or marchers. A group in the city has announced it will be visiting Government office buildings and possibly to Congress. It will require the assignment of large numbers of police officers at the same time that we have a difficult crime problem.

So we are concerned because the Department is taxed these days with some very serious problems.