I have owned my properties and paid taxes on them for over 30 years. I have abided by all the laws and regulations demanded by my City and its Commissioners and its Mayor. In return, I expected that which the law provides for me, namely, the protection of life and property. This I did not receive. I have suffered irreparable harm and a great financial loss in the destruction of these properties. I feel that if my property had been protected for me as provided by law, this condition would never have existed. It is presumptuous on the part of the District Government to demand that we now clear away all of the rubble and debris at our expense.

I, and the other victims in my circumstance, should not pay the price that may be the obligation of the entire community. Why should we be the ones to suffer the result of wholesale disregard for law and order? At best it is a community responsibility. I not only feel that this is their responsibility but, furthermore, I believe that every property owner who has suffered a loss due to these circumstances should be reimbursed for the entire cost of these damaged properties, as these owners were innocent victims.

Mr. WHITENER. Mr. Winn?

RESTRAINTS ON POLICE

Mr. WINN. You said in the first part of your statement, "The police and fire departments did the best they could in view of the restrictions placed upon them by their superior officers."

We have been sitting here for a week trying to get any actual proof of any orders that were issued that they were actually restricted. All that we have been able to ascertain is that the policy came from the Justice Department to the Police Department.

Do you have any actual proof?

I suppose you heard the statement read by the Chairman?

Mr. COHEN. I took particular notice when I was here the other day when the Mayor and the Chief of Police both testified, and I think I am quoting it correctly when they stated that neither one of them gave the orders to the police department not to make arrests. I know, at least I feel, that if you watched television—and I am sure that the rest of these folks here did, too—that something was wrong; that where the order came from—and it had to be an order—I think this body here has a perfectly right to find out—I think if you convened a grand jury and called in some of these policemen, and I think it is very important to our city, and I would promise them immunity and see to that they get it from the rest of the police department, you will find the real truth back of this order. But, as I said before, if you watched television and you saw a policeman standing by, that is not our police department.

Mr. WINN. I appreciate that. I have been sitting here a week or so trying to get the answer. I think it is more confusing now than it was before, because it seems to be that there was not an actual order that was issued anywhere. But I agree with you, from remarks from policemen and plainclothesmen, that they understood that they were to follow this policy that seems to have been sent down through the ranks. I think there is something funny there.

As a member of the Committee, I was trying to find out.