

Mr. DRIPPS. Yes, sir. We believe there are 229.

Mr. WINN. 229?

Mr. DRIPPS. Yes, sir.

Mr. WHITENER. You understand, of course, this bill contemplates reimbursement to those people who have already expended their money to remove the buildings, and not simply because they had a notice from the District government, but if the buildings were unsafe, they went ahead and removed it?

Mr. DRIPPS. Yes, sir.

Mr. WHITENER. You understand that we would not want to limit the recovery to just those who had a letter from you folks?

Mr. DRIPPS. I do not know of anyone who has gone ahead without having received a notice. Certainly, if it could be shown that the building was removed, we will take care of that.

Mr. WHITENER. Let me ask you this, Mr. Dripps. The District government took it upon itself immediately after the rioting downtown to go out and knock over some walls, and about \$16,000 worth of wrecking equipment was being used—I read this in the papers. What about that? Is there any need to take that into account in this?

Mr. DRIPPS. Yes, they had to tear them down. We did commandeer equipment, and we did demolish walls that were still standing in such a position that they could fall into the street. The District paid for this out of its own funds. Under the circumstances, we felt that we were unable to do anything else. There is no thought of trying to recover that.

Mr. WHITENER. There will not be any effort by the District government to assess any property owner for demolition work carried on by the District of Columbia government at the discretion of the District of Columbia government and not pursuant to a letter to the property owner under the act of 1899?

Mr. DRIPPS. That is quite correct.

Mr. WHITENER. Is there anything else?

Mr. KNEIPP. No, sir. Thank you.

Mr. WINN. I would like to ask this: How long do you think it will take to clean up those 229 buildings? Can you give us any estimate of that?

Mr. DRIPPS. The actual length of time involved is quite unknown at this time. We have to have all of the contracts let by the 30th of June, or we will lose all of the money that we have for doing this.

Mr. WINN. You have to let the contracts by the 30th of June?

Mr. DRIPPS. Yes. We would contemplate that by the first of September the job would be finished.

Mr. WINN. Have your inspectors also checked out this, because many of those buildings are buildings with party walls and you might run into a lot of other dangers that will show up, where one building has been burned down between the two standing. You are liable to develop a whole lot of new problems in cleaning.

Mr. DRIPPS. Yes, sir. We are going to go into that.

Mr. WINN. Who will pay for that?

Mr. DRIPPS. You are quite correct on that. I do not have any estimate. We will have to meet the problems as we face them. Where we have a whole bunch of unsafe buildings out there, something has to be done.