

it was desirable and -- off the record.

(At which time a discussion was held off the record.)

CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Commissioners, you were tired when you started with us over three hours ago, and I think unless there is a pressing question we ought to release you with great thanks.

MR. BROWN: Just one comment, I spoke to Bishop Taylor at lunch and he was talking about the fact that in Africa, that Africans are suddenly realizing what it means to be governed by Africans, and that all the problems still go on. The black isn't going to make any difference. The fact that the negro is going to cut another and do all the rest, how in the name of God that we can seal in the idea that it isn't black, it's people and the way they grow. Because in Africa, as you pointed out to me, the same problems are there. What in the world is the difference? If we can just get the black out of the damn thing.

CHAIRMAN LILLEY: Well, Commissioner, thank you.

(At this time Mr. George Conant was brought into the hearing room to testify before the Governor's

(Subject Admission.)

MR. BROWN: I would suggest, George, that you start talking to the commission about your experiences from the beginning of this to the beginning of whatever happened to Hayes. When were you aware that something was occurring in the neighborhood?

MR. WILSON: Around the afternoon, it was a Thursday, and that was what, the 12th?

MR. BROWN: I think it was the 12th.

GOVERNOR CANNON: It was Wednesday night when they were at the police station, wasn't they, complaining about what happened to the taxi cab driver?

MR. CANNON: They may have been there complaining about that, but I wasn't aware of this at the time, but my first contact with this thing that grew up, I believe, it was on Thursday afternoon. There had been rumors in and out of the office. You know, a managers office is kind of like a communication center in a sense, and problems in the project, often times people will come in and acquaint you with them as they are happening, or sometimes before. So, this particular afternoon one of the employees came in and said, "I understand that there is to be a rally on the project this afternoon." U 11.



right away I became interested in this, because as a manager, naturally, your primary -- one of your primary functions, of course, is protection of property and persons. So I tried to find out if anything was actually occurring or if this was just another rumor. I wasn't successful in finding out anything until one of the employees brought in a leaflet, and this leaflet was sort of a ditto affair and it indicated that there would be a meeting that evening, seven p.m., I believe it said. I don't know who prepared this leaflet, I got my ideas later, but I'm not certain of the preparation of it.

Anyway, as a result of this I got in touch with my central office to tell them that in my opinion something was brewing. Then walking on the project I noticed that over across the street from the project in front of -- directly in front of the precinct there were several youngsters picketing. The signs were, I noticed this because the signs seemed to be hand printed and crude, and in my opinion the manner of the youngsters was one sort of gaiety, like having a lark.

MR. LEONTER: Excuse me, Mr. Cannon, may I ask you what you mean when you use the term youngsters? What age approximately?



MR. CANNON: Thirteen, fourteen, no older
older. Some younger, sub-teen. They were circling in a picketing
sort of manner, I didn't notice any adults present, and, in fact,
on my property, the project property, there was no people that
seemed to be noticing this at all. That was somewhere around
three o'clock in the afternoon. Then at or about or around six
or so -- no, a little earlier, around four or so some persons did
start to gather along Seventeenth Avenue on the project side, but
they were scattered groups, curious, it seemed to me. I didn't
contact or talk to any of them, I was just observing. So I went
back to the maintenance room, and then at about six o'clock is
when I was told that there was a large crowd that had gathered
in front of the precinct, and I think this crowd was really on
my side of the street. So, anyway, I went over and I looked
and then there were quite a number of people. If I were to try
to estimate the number that I saw, I couldn't see the entire
block, but from the range of scope that I could see, fifty or so
persons. Now, this is all age categories now.

GOVERNOR MEMBER: When you say precinct --

MR. CANNON: The Fourth Precinct, the
police headquarters for this area, it is directly across the
street from this property.



GOVERNOR MEYNER: Was this the one that had the incident the night before?

MR. CANNON: Yes. At least this is the way I read it in the paper.

So, I had gone back to the maintenance room at about this time, this meeting had been scheduled for seven o'clock according to the leaflet, this was about six o'clock. When I could hear like a rumble of noise which was really voices, shouts or something, and there was a surge of youngsters running. I know they had to be youngsters because none of them could run like that if they were my age. Anyway, they were running from 17th Avenue through the project. Then apparently, this is now closer to seven or somewhere in there, there had been -- I didn't witness this -- but there had been some speeches or something, and this is conjecture, attempts, maybe, to disperse the crowd, but, anyway, this is apparently what I saw these events recorded on TV, whatever it was, but these youngsters were surging through the project and then they could go back. Now, I'm staying stationary in one place. I'm merely trying to keep phone contact with my office, my control office and control of my men.

I sent out and had all of my personnel



to come back to the one central place. Then the next thing that I recall that is supposed to have occurred, they left the precinct, the crowd, and went to G.E., which is in the next block.

MR. BRUSH: What is G.E.?

MR. CANNON: General Electric, the factory, they were breaking windows there. The next thing was a car had been set afire on 17th Avenue, and then another car had been set afire on the parking lot which is on my property.

Time progressed. I don't know exactly how much now. Now, lots of people are mingling back and forth towards 17th Avenue. This was after eight o'clock.

The next incident that I know there was a crowd that sort of surged from 17th Avenue toward Winney Street and they went toward the school and they were breaking out windows there.

GOVERNOR MEYNER: Were many of these people your people that lived in the housing?

MR. CANNON: I can't really say, I'm quite certain there were housing authority tenants involved as well as other people in the community. I think that, I know I was observing windows and roofs because you see, we tried to, in fact, we had made an inspection of the roof to see if there

was any stockpiling up there, I had done that that afternoon. Usually around Halloween the kids will stock pile sticks and so forth, we sent the maintenance men up and they cleared off the roof. So, that afternoon these roofs were clear, every roof.

So, in looking around during the course of that happening there were practically in every window people were looking out. I shouldn't say that, that's not accurate, lots of windows people were looking out, and I had the general feeling that most of the tenants could see as much as they wanted to see and didn't necessarily need to be out there in the crowd, but this is an opinion.

MR. LEWIS: Do you mind if we interrupt like this?

At this point did you know what the agitation was about? Now you do, but at that point or that afternoon when the children were picketing did you have any idea of what was on the signs?

MR. CANNON: No, other than what this leaflet had said. As nearly as I can recall, the leaflet said, "we are having a rally," and it had the word, "police brutality," in it. This was worded in it. It's possible that I could get a copy of that leaflet.

GOVERNOR MEYNER: Which you had read in the daily paper and there had been some discussion in the morning and what not?

MR. CANNON: There had been some discussion, but, frankly, what I had read in the paper I was not concerned with at the time, so as far as what it was about at that time, as I reflect on it, my thinking at that time, I didn't have a real opinion. If I go back to rehearsing, this is the first thing I think about, that leaflet.

So, what it was about, as far as my thinking right then in that circumstance being concerned with what was going to occur on this project.

MR. LEONTER: And in the afternoon when you seen the children, there were a few children and you weren't particularly upset by it?

MR. CANNON: I remember saying to myself, "this is ridiculous, the kids over there picketing in front of the police precinct." I remember having another thought, but I was wondering why the heck the police didn't stop them. If I had been in charge of that precinct, I think this is what I would have tried to do. However, --

GOVERNOR MEYNER: You are up to eight



or nine o'clock that night.

MR. CANNON: Yes. The next incident was up around Springfield Avenue. You see, it is only one block to the west to Springfield Avenue, so this was the next incident that I had knowledge of, and I was getting these reports back to me, and I consider them factual as far as where the crowd was concentrating, from my maintenance people. The crowd had gone to Springfield Avenue, after there was no other incidents -- I left that night somewhere around ten o'clock. They were just at Springfield Avenue. Nothing happened on the project as far as I could ascertain.

MR. BROWN: You heard some shots?

MR. CANNON: At that time, no.

GOVERNOR REYNER: Did you observe any police activity while all this was beginning?

MR. CANNON: On the project the only knowledge I had of any police were two housing guards who normally patrol the project, these two fellows were in my maintenance room, in the bathroom with the lights out, and actually afraid to show their faces.

GOVERNOR REYNER: Were there any other police forces?



OFFICER: These are housing guards
The Housing Authority used to have
the housing police themselves, they were employees. Then about
1964, I think it was, they made an agreement with the city,
through the city would actually control and hire the police
officers. They're specific, that was a lot, but the
men have received special training and the Housing Authority
city would contribute a certain amount toward their salary.
Well, these officers are assigned generally the duty of patrol-
ing projects, they're specifically there for going in and out
of buildings and controlling buildings and the property as
such.

MR. STANLEY: Are they armed?

MR. DANNON: They are armed.

GOVERNOR HEYNER: Are they white or
black?

MR. DANNON: These two are white.
These are all who generally work in this building, some
of whom are white. These two fellows were white and
were in the maintenance room.

I suppose it could be concluded that
the way I said that that I held them in some way.

I don't really, because I think if it had been me and in a uniform, I would have been very interested in secreting myself, but at the same time I think my opinion was flavored by the fact that prior to the riots these two men weren't worth a damn to me, really, in their services. But that's beside the point also.

BISHOP TAYLOR: Would you elaborate a little on that? When you say "weren't any help to you," you want to elaborate on that just a little, what kind of help?

MR. CANNON: What I was referring to is this, the agreement between the city and the Housing Authority is that the housing officer will enter a building, ride an elevator up to a roof, meanwhile his eyes and ears observing, walk down a stairwell and out that building around the grounds to another building. I find a lot of officers being human and not being immediately supervised during their tour of duty will spend most of their time in, say, the maintenance room, loitering. And, as far as the intended purpose, they're not doing it. I think it depends on the individual, some do and some don't. But they will respond to a call. I can never say that any of the officers that have been cited don't respond to calls. And they are helpful if the situation is brought to



them. But you see, these men are supposed to be seeking situations, and I know, my opinion and my experience has been with these two men in the time I've been at this project that they are of less value to me and my purpose than any of the other six. This is not an unknown factor to Captain Zizzo, who is in charge of that 4th Precinct.

GOVERNOR DRISCOLL: Are these political appointments, would you say?

MR. CANNON: Yes and no. No in the sense that any person can go and apply and be considered. But a number of people applying, often times the favor or the knowledge or knowing someone will get you hired faster than it will get "Joe" hired. So, it does have a political flavor, but it is not necessarily political. This is, I think: this is a factual statement of how it is there.

To get back to completing the incident that night. After these people had gone, or the crowd had gone to Springfield Avenue, there was one other thing that I recall that occurred in the -- or right on the project at the corner of 17th Avenue and Boyd Street. There was a group there and this was a considerable number of people. I would estimate when I looked at it that it was a couple of hundred people.

They were in a group there and they were singing and there... were some bongos being played, and I know that those bongos were being played by some fellows who were in what I would call African costumes. I also noticed that the two or three of those costumed people that I saw are not tenants. Where they come from I do not know, but they had the bongos and this I made the comment to myself and maybe to a couple other of the maintenance employees, that those guys are only agitating the deal up. But, anyway, this too passed and the area, as far as the immediate project seemed to be quiet other than people in larger numbers than usual for that hour, especially adults were going back and forth.

I left the project myself somewhere around ten o'clock, went up West Kinney Street, because I knew there was a heck of a lot of glass down around the school on West Kinney, so I turned, that would be west, and as I got to the corner of Springfield Avenue and what is really West Kinney Street, there was a man, I don't think I'd ever forget him, I don't know if I'd be able to recognize him if I saw him, but I'll never forget the picture that he made. He was standing in the showcase window for that baby carriage place kicking glass, and he could have been completely sober, but I got the impres-



sion, I was as close to him as I am to the gentleman, Mr. Lilley, and he appeared to be drunk to me. I may be perfectly wrong, but this was the impression that I had because of the way that he was sort of staggering, but he was kicking glass out. It was already broken, you could walk in the showcase but he was kicking the rest of it out.

So then I drove across Springfield Avenue through a red light, and when I got as far as 14th Avenue people were sitting on the stoops or standing, not in groups, just may be one or two, just as though the world was as calm as it could be. In other words, what I'm trying to say, a block and a half away from Springfield Avenue, along Morris Avenue people were acting unconcerned. I went home -- no, I went and picked up my wife and went home.

Now, that's that particular night. The first incidents that I have recalling on it.

Subsequent nights and days, I don't know what to say about this, so perhaps questions would be better.

MR. BROWN: That night did you get in touch with your Headquarters, Mr. Danzig and Company?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BROWN: What did they advise you to do or direct you to do?

MR. CANNON: Do what you can. I'm trying to quote Mr. Danzig. "Do what you can to see that your tenants are not involved. Do what you can to help anybody that gets hurt and do what you can to get people back inside, and make sure that you know where your own men are."

MR. BROWN: Did you ask for meetings so the people could get together and try to evaluate this at that time?

MR. CANNON: No, not that particular night. Let's see, I remember definitely asking for some meeting on Saturday and Sunday.

MR. BROWN: What was the response of Danzig's office then?

MR. CANNON: Frankly, I think by Sunday -- I don't know when he left, but Mr. Danzig had gone out of town. I think the purpose was he had received some sort of information that there might be possibly some attempt to harm his family or something, and he was getting them out of town. This was the way it was explained to me. But Mr. Sibellela who is my boss, the Assistant Executive Director had had a



meeting with some other personnel, not with me or the manager at Wrights Homes or at Soudias Homes, one these projects immediately involved, but then he did have a meeting with us on, I think it was Sunday afternoon. I was the only manager that attended, but I think this meeting Sunday afternoon was really called because I had been yelling. Several things I wanted a clear understanding on and so forth. There were problems, problems of getting men in and out to work, who lived out of the immediate area, problems of authorizing these people who continue staying on the project working. Problems of having mechanics, electricians, plumbers, even carpenters involved, locks available for work. These kind of things, and then too by Saturday evening and what not, people were talking about the need for food.

MR. BROWN: How did your white maintenance men make out during this period?

MR. CANNON: I kept mine, I'll say not only the maintenance -- well, see, when you say maintenance --

MR. BROWN: Well, white employees?

MR. CANNON: I kept them on duty until -- I know it was Friday. Thursday night the ones that were scheduled for duty stayed there up until, I think, it was around



eight o'clock.

MR. BROWN: Any reaction against the white employees?

MR. CANNON: None that I know of.

None that I know of. And even subsequently I've asked this question of various white employees, had they had any feeling of animosity or something from tenants, and the response has been negative. In fact, one fellow who is a senior maintenance repairman said to me, if anything at all, I kind of think people were greeting me sort of specially nice, they must have been glad to see me get back here. I think what he was referring to was an interruption of what his normal service during this period, and getting some of these people back meant that some of these things that people needed to have done now were going to be accomplished.

MR. BROWN: But this was in the heart of the riot, and this fellow was able to walk in and out?

MR. CANNON: I started to say that on Thursday I had white people still at the project until approximately eight o'clock, scheduled for nine, I sent them home.

MR. LEONTER: You were afraid for them?

THE MOUNTAIN

The mountain was a great, dark, jagged mass,
 rising like a giant's hand from the sea.
 Its peaks were sharp and cold, and its
 slopes were steep and bare.
 The wind whistled through the
 crags and crevices, and the
 waves crashed against its base.
 The sky was a pale, leaden grey,
 and the clouds were heavy and low.
 The mountain stood alone and
 silent, a sentinel of the sea.
 Its name was the Mountain,
 and its people were the
 Mountain People.
 They were a hardy and
 brave folk, who had
 lived on the mountain
 for many years.
 They were used to the
 cold and the wind, and
 they were used to the
 sea.
 They were used to the
 life of the mountain,
 and they were used to
 the life of the sea.
 They were used to the
 life of the Mountain
 and the sea, and they
 were used to the life
 of the Mountain and
 the sea.

THE MOUNTAIN

The mountain was a great, dark, jagged mass,
 rising like a giant's hand from the sea.
 Its peaks were sharp and cold, and its
 slopes were steep and bare.

these negroes towards the white people?

MR. CANNON: These employees, as far as I have any knowledge of, and the ones that I have questioned, the attitude was the same as it had been all through this.

MR. LEUCHTER: They've known them personally?

GOVERNOR MEYNER: How many tenants do you have?

MR. CANNON: One thousand five hundred fifty-six units.

GOVERNOR MEYNER: With how many people?

MR. CANNON: Multiply that by four, it's a very rough figure.

MR. BROWN: All six thousand couldn't know these guys personally.

MR. CANNON: No, you don't find all units persons going to all buildings, maybe this is the impression you can have. For instance, you can think of a man named Riley who works primarily in these buildings, the other eight buildings he doesn't go into, except in an emergency.

MR. BROWN: That is not his assignment?

MR. CANNON: That's right.



In one of the offices I have practically four white persons, well, they don't go out of the building but they have contact with persons who come in from five buildings.

MR. BROWN: What is the reaction of these people when they come in? A negro woman comes in, there's been a riot, how does she treat a white clerk?

MR. CANNON: I don't think there has been any difference in the attitude of the tenant to the white persons working in that building before. Not that I have knowledge of.

MR. BROWN: You questioned the people, haven't you?

MR. CANNON: I questioned one or two of the employees.

MR. BROWN: Does this include female white?

MR. CANNON: I did with the office staff. I have one particular woman who has on occasion had some words with a few tenants, and the tenants have said that they don't like her particularly, but this is the woman's personality, not because she is white.

MR. BROWN: Did she have any trouble when she came to work?

MR. CANNON: No. I got all these people together and I said to them there have been problems, as you know, and I want each one of you to be more polite than you have ever been since you have been working in housing, and I think each employee made a conscientious effort. In fact, when I did this, it wasn't only with white employees, I did it with all employees. And as far as I know there has been no unpleasantness between tenants and employees that I know of right in this particular time past.

MR. LEUCHTER: Mr. Cannon, would you suggest, therefore, on the basis of what you were telling us that the range of bitterness or frustrations, or whatever it was that erupted, was directed therefore, not at the whites as individuals but at a power structure, a system? Because this apparently is what it leads to, whites walking right in and ignored. There was no animosity in the Hayes Homes to these whites, it was just human beings, and they let them alone.

MR. CANNON: I think the best way I can answer that is to say the relationship of the tenants with the persons they know to be employed in the Housing Authority

must be a different relationship from that same contact with some other person in the area who is either passing through casually or perhaps is in business in the area or something. I could not conclude from what I have observed in regards to the white employees at Hayes Homes and the tenants who have come in that there be any animosity towards white persons. I conclude this, I have had tenants come in to me, and this is a small percentage now, and we always emphasize a small percentage, there's been no difference, really. I've had some people come into me and their attitude has been to me more demanding than I have ever experienced as a manager before.

MR. BROWN: That's demanding of you?

MR. CANNON: Yes, and in this sense you could take another step -- I'm the Housing Authority.

MR. BROWN: And you are not passing for white.

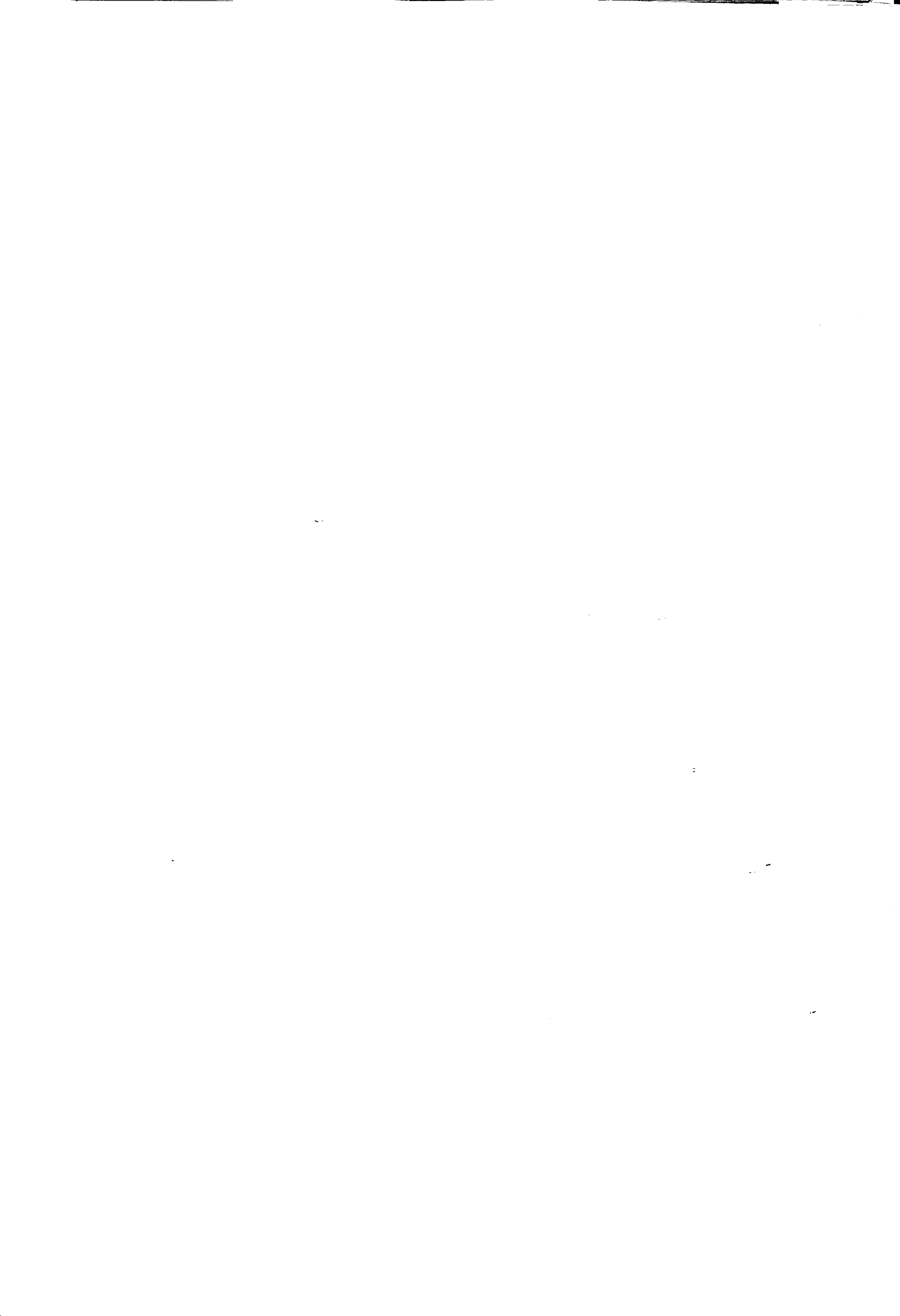
MR. CANNON: Very definitely, except on occasions.

But what I'm trying to say is they have been demanding of something and I say something to which they're entitled, service, a broken glass, a broken window, insisting that this window be fixed yesterday, whereas two weeks



before that this same person would have come in and said, "I made a request for a window to be fixed two weeks ago, it hasn't been fixed yet. Can I get it fixed?"

I have had people say to me I'm not going to pay any rent unless those curtain hooks are put up. The lady I have in mind that said this, I consider her a good tenant, if you are thinking in terms of sociological factors, there is no husband in the family, I think she's doing a damn good job of raising her children, I think she's a fair to better housekeeper, I've never seen the woman when she looked dirty or anything, she's always neat and clean looking, the children are the same way. I have some problems with the kids, no more so than you have with any kid on a public housing project where you tell them not to play on the grass. But this woman that I'm thinking about stood me against the wall for a good half hour a few days ago, I don't know exactly when it was, demanding some things that I know that her attitude prior to this was different. She was now demanding that this thing be done and she told me that it hadn't been done for X number of weeks, or a month or something like this. It was done the next day, not because of her attitude but because I became aware of it. You see, in the housing, and I have to say this in fairness, in



housing you get a lot of requests come in for various things, and they're sort of rated according to human needs, a lot of these things the guy doesn't go back to the backlog because you are always getting the things that are still current. So, therefore, I have no doubt that when she says that this particular service had been delayed and she had asked for it before, but the point I'm trying to make is when she came in and had me up against the wall even outside the office still talking about this, this woman's attitude was one of demanding and saying she was not going to pay rent, and I know that it was influenced by what had happened recently, because she said to me that you people in the housing authority -- I don't know her exact words, but the inference was -- don't give damn whether I have hooks in my apartment or not. So, this thing that happened the other day is going to wake you up to a few things. This was the essence of her conversation.

I have had other people on the other end of the coin who have come in and who have deplored the things that have occurred and have felt that -- I've had people who have moved, I've had people who have come and told me that they are planning to move as soon as they can find a place because they are afraid to live in the area.



MR. LOFTON: When you say afraid to live in the area, what in the area are they afraid of?

MR. CANNON: You have to infer what they're saying, they don't say afraid of another riot.

MR. BROWN: Are they afraid of the white cap or the negro riot?

MR. CANNON: I think they're afraid of another incident occurring in the area, these immediate ones I'm talking about who have come in and talked about moving, afraid of another incident occurring in the area where there might be shooting and they might possibly be harmed or their family. They are also afraid of the breaking and entering sort of thing. This is a very eminent sort of thing in that area now. I do mean by criminals, the person who breaks and enters an apartment with the intent of taking something out of that persons apartment illegally. They are afraid of this sort of thing. If you know, you don't know, the Hayes Homes is a project that has a stairwell that has no windows, it is completely closed in, and if a person screws the bulbs out, that hall is completely dark, and, therefore, anything above the lobby floor people are afraid of being caught in a hall.

MR. BROWN: Who are they afraid of,



whites, negroes, cops, what?

MR. DANNEN: They are afraid of the criminal element. This is the way I would phrase it. I couldn't say from my knowledge of what people have said to me that they're afraid of policemen. People on that point, let me say this, during the period of the five day riot and after, I don't know how long, the police, the training guards were not patrolling the project. They had a stationary post at the 12 Precinct, there were occasions when people did call for police assistance, the police responded.

MR. BROWN: Came into the project during the riot?

MR. CANNON: Well, yes, the riot is the whole five day period, yes, during the course of the riot, police responded on calls, I don't know how many, but I know the response was made.

MR. BROWN: These would be white cops?

MR. CANNON: I can't answer that. I would say this, mostly negroes because they deliberately re-deployed their personnel so that they were using negro policemen primarily. I had this personal contact though, it was like Monday the 17th, and this officer Rizzillo, who is new and who



is efficient and does a good job, has his walkie-talkie in his hand and I saw him walking down Boyd Street to 114 Avenue, he's about mid-way to the block when I saw him in his uniform, the walkie-talkie in one hand and the club in the other hand. I said to him, "Gene, what are you doing here?" Gene is new and he's one of those fellows whose conscientious. If they said patrol, he would patrol. He said, "well, I was told to come to the project." I said, "well, all the other fellows have been at the project and I understand it was a stationary post, what are you doing?" He said, "maybe it's mixed up."

I got on the phone and I got the desk lieutenant and I said, "have the orders been changed, have you now got the housing policeman patrolling again?"

"No"

I said, "well, there is one over here." He said, "well, tell him to report back to the precinct." So Gene reports back to the precinct. The point I was trying to make in response to something you asked me was that during this period, not the height of the real activity, but in the lulls, the persons in it, the people in the project did find need to call upon the police and did so. So, someone had asked and I was put on the spot more or less to answer the question



whether I thought tenants were afraid of white policemen or policemen. My opinion is they are not because they still relied upon them and needed them. And Building I, 302 Hunterdon Street where these apartments were shot up and where Mrs. Feldman was killed, subsequent to the five day period there was a period of about a week there when a group of teenagers and early twenties, boys were hanging in front of the project, people were calling the office, various tenants, I don't mean every second, but two or three calls in the course of a day, this is unusual from the same spot complaining about the same thing. The housing police responded and also a radio car, and they inquired, you know, talked with these boys, they found some narcotics on some one of them, arrested four of them, two of them were tenants' sons, members of tenant families.

MR. LEUCHTER: Did you, living there, right across the street from the 4th Precinct, did you feel any tensions building, did you see them getting more bitter, more frustrated, tempers rising, all of the things supposing you need one spark, did you feel anything coming?

MR. CANNON: You mean in time, weeks or years?

MR. LEUCHTER: That week, was it any



different than it had been a year ago, two years ago?

MR. DANNON: Yes and no. The no part. My evaluation, and I say this loud and clear, in evaluating what I've said you will remember this, my evaluation of what was likely to happen was nothing was likely to happen. Too many times in Newark there had been rumors of disturbances about to occur, or groups of youngsters about to tear down a project or something, and it filters out to nothing. So, my evaluation immediately before that Tuesday and what not, I had not even taken into consideration this incident of the cab driver and so forth. This was just another incident that I had heard was that nothing was likely to happen. I had made no preparations for this. If I had, I would have had those locks fixed on the roof so I could have locked them, and fought with the fire department about them. We have been over that hassle years, Halloween and what not. You are always required to keep them open because of the fire laws, but if I had thought, even suspected the least bit that there was anything to be likely in the way of a riot or because of the current temperament I would have gotten those rooftops locked.

MR. LOFTON: Is this attitude that you are expressing prior to Wednesday or after Wednesday?



MR. CANNON: Prior to Wednesday. I'm talking prior to the 12th of July, around there. That's the no part.

The yes part, during that week I remember a couple of people had mentioned something is brewing, you know, this sort of thing. And what they were referring to was, well, let's make it specific -- one employee, Harry Van Dyke had come into me earlier that week and said something about some rally or something to be held. Rally to be held always connotes crowds and something likely to happen on the project. So, I'm attuned to this sort of thing as a possibility of something I should know and take precautions against. Well, nothing had happened and I had passed it off in the way I answered the other side of the question, no, it's not likely to happen. But the yes part is that there was, I felt personal tension, but my tensions, I think, was not because I felt something was likely to happen, my tension was if there is a meeting or something on the project, I got a problem. I guess I was self centered in that sense I wasn't thinking about the community of the city or across the street or downtown, I was thinking if there was a rally I sure in hell hope they don't have it on this project.

MR. LEUNTER: No reason to expect violence?

MR. CANNON: No, but there was this sort of tension to me. Now, on this same day and that afternoon, yes, there was tension, you could feel it in the absence, it seemed, of, I don't know, as I reflect on it, it just seemed there was tension in the air that afternoon, and especially as you got around four o'clock and so forth there was definite tension in the air. You see, another way, you can see a youngster who normally is out playing basketball, say, and these kids are over in a group and they're talking, this isn't normal on my project.

MR. BROWN: Were these the kids themselves or was there Brown or Smith or Jones there standing there up as far as you could see?

MR. CANNON: No, I didn't see nobody there.

MR. BROWN: These were local kids?

MR. CANNON: Yes, they weren't over by the precinct and there was no big crowd, but I seen some of the kids that normally would have been out playing ball and not have been there. And I'm observing this and thinking, this

is that afternoon now, three, four o'clock, like that. Why I think they were standing around is that they had seen these leaflets and they were waiting for this meeting. So, now, to me I felt a tension in the air because I could see these youngsters doing these various things. You see, at this project in the past years, going back, I can remember about eight years ago there were a couple of organized gangs, they no longer exist to my knowledge, and on occasions the word would get around that there was going to be a rumble that night, this was the same sort of thing that was occurring that afternoon, I felt something was going to happen. This was on that same afternoon, not the day before. I was hoping that there wouldn't be any meeting, but when these sort of rumbles used to occur with these youngsters, the fighting ground was the playground, and we would be taking precautions to see that the youngsters were involved on the playground in a game or didn't congregate or something. If we saw any members of the two groups we would talk to them, the phrase was "cool it."

MR. LOFTON: Prior to the Wednesday with the incident with the cab driver, to your knowledge, being present in the housing project on a daily basis, was there any demonstrations, say, during the month of the incident or the

incident with the cab driver? Was any of this occurring?

MR. CANNON: Not to my knowledge.

MR. LOFTON: Also during that month were there any leaflets or anything of that nature circulated throughout the housing project that came to your attention, like making a Molotov Cocktail?

MR. CANNON: Not in the immediate month, but now that you mention that, a leaflet saying "Molotov Cocktail," I went to Hayes Homes in April of this year, prior to going to Hayes Homes I had Wright Homes and I remember last year when Stokely Carmichael came to town and just prior to that Stokely spoke right on the corner of Prince and Spruce, I remember prior to that there were some leaflets circulated.

MR. LOFTON: This is in '66 now?

MR. CANNON: That's right, and the essence of the wording was "Molotov Cocktails" and burning Cam-berger's windows and that sort of thing. But in between that time, and up to this leaflet I referred to before, at the moment I can't recall any other leaflets or any meetings in the month of July or even in June, 1967.

MR. BROWN: Talking about it, the Car-michael time, was that a time that you were apprehensive that

something might blow?

MR. CANNON: Yes, that day. I remember it had been announced, I don't remember how long before his actual arrival was announced, but I remember that afternoon sending employees home early, I remember reducing my office staff to a bare minimum and keeping them in the immediate area of the maintenance room. All this was done in preparation because Stokely Carmichael was going to speak. It was announced it was going to be in the Prudential Apartments there, which is below the project area, but it turned out later that it was on the corner of Prince and Spruce, but this thing passed as calmly as we are talking here, and there was a group of people that were gathering around, people were passing by, they would look up and keep walking just as though it was TV and something was going on, they're not interested, they kept going. Boys were out in the playground playing basketball the whole while he was there, teenage boys. So, this incident arrived, happened and passed without anything.

Well, I remember being concerned and I think my concern that time was started by a call I had from the central office to take these precautions.

MR. BROWN: You got no such call even



on Thursday of this case?

MR. CANNON: No.

MR. LOFTON: A couple of more questions, you were present on the Wednesday night prior to or after the incident with the cab driver, were you?

MR. CANNON: No.

MR. LOFTON: Now, you came to work on Thursday?

MR. CANNON: Yes.

MR. LOFTON: Did you have occasion to discuss with any of the tenants in the Hayes Homes any of their reactions to what took place on Wednesday night?

MR. CANNON: No, not on that day.

GOVERNOR DRISCOLL: Did you hear the rumor that police had beat up the cab driver or killed him?

MR. CANNON: I'm thinking about your question and his. And I do recall having a conversation with a tenant on Tuesday morning in which -- Thursday morning in which whether or not this cab driver was alive or was not alive was discussed. That conversation was with Tempstall, who, as you know, is the Ex-president of the Tenant Association for Hayes Homes and is now, I think, the city wide -- no -- maybe

presently the city wide president of the Tenant Association.

MR. BROWN: What was the tenure of the conversation?

MR. CANNON: I have forgotten exactly what Temp quoted me, but I remember in that conversation this was the first inkling that I had that there might be some sort of meeting on the project that day. I kept this to myself and then I did not -- the next person that mentioned it to me was when Harry Van Dyke came in, and the next thing was when I got the leaflet and this confirmed what these two persons had said, but not Temp's conversation really pertaining to the likelihood of some sort of meeting taking place, and if I hear anything about it to relate it to him.

MR. LOFTON: Now, Mr. Cannon, in your capacity as head of the housing project in Hayes Homes are you in fairly constant communication with the people in charge of the precinct at the 4th Precinct?

MR. CANNON: Yes, Captain Zizzo, who is in charge, is very cooperative and is receptive to telephone calls or visits anytime pertaining to anything that is a problem in the project.

MR. LOFTON: My second question is

during the month or anytime prior to the hostilities breaking out in the area around in through the Hayes Homes or subsequent to the Wednesday, did you ever discuss with anybody in the police precinct in terms of what kind of precautionary procedures ought to be used or what you ought to do if any hostilities broke out in the area of the Hayes Homes?

MR. CANNON: No.

MR. LOFTON: Never?

MR. CANNON: No. Prior to the incident, conversations I had with Captain Zizzo, or, perhaps even a desk lieutenant, pertained to some specific incident that may have occurred like suspicion of narcotics in a particular apartment, watch that apartment, or a break and entry in a particular apartment, has it been reported, follow up on it, I have another bit of information, a description of a person who was seen in the area. This sort of thing. But precautionary measures in the event of some large scale before or after the incident, I have had not any conversations with any member of the police department.

MR. LOFTON: Did I understand you to say that the stairwells of the Hayes Homes have no windows?

MR. CANNON: This is correct.

MR. LOFTON: There have been some re-
puted, or allegations that the Hayes Homes, along with other
housing projects, were used as havens for an indeterminate num-
ber of snipers. Have you had occasion to discuss that allega-
tion with any of the tenants or any discussions about that at
all, or whether or not they had heard or saw or had any knowl-
edge about any such persons being in the area?

MR. CANNON: Subsequent to the affair.
You see, in 322 Hunterdon Street, and this is the only knowledge,
starting with about the eighth floor in the F and the E tier,
bullets either direct or ricocheted went into the apartments
and tore -- you'd have to see it to really appreciate it -- but
tore holes in the ceiling, chipped off brick on the outside of
the window ledge, shattered the glass, shattered the screen,
went across the room, from windows all the way over here, across
the room and imbedded into the wall at least the height of my
head. Went through windows, through a thin wall. Say that you
have a bathroom, and where the door is it is a thinner wall
than the wall between the bathroom and the living room. Tore a
hole the size of this through this thin wall and gone on across
this little hallway into the apartment and into the next room.
These persons, some of them who occupied those immediate apart-

ments in those levels did come into -- you see, my project is split into three offices -- did come into Mrs. Ward's office and told her many things, all of which she did not relate to me about what was going that night, and how their apartments had been damaged. Two persons I know of came into her office. This is hearsay now because she related to me, and said that subsequent to and immediately during this, persons had been in the area of the lobby and they felt that they were afraid to go through because a couple of people had been rigged and that they were going to arm themselves and project -- not arm, some that, protect themselves, "I got a gun."

Now, specifically on the question of a tenant saying a sniper was in the building, no person has said this to me, and Mrs. Ward, she's very talkative, she has not said to me that any tenant has said to her that a sniper was in the building. I can only assume that since fire was directed from that particular area of Springfield Avenue and Hunterdon Street, at the specific location and above the eighth floor, mind you, because if you go down below the eighth floor there is very little of anything, rickshaws hit maybe one or two, the concentration is the tenth and the eleventh floor, the sixth floor there was less.



MR. BRODIN: How far is that from below the roof?

MR. CANNON: The twelfth floor would be the top floor. This fire was directed at this particular concentrated area on one little angle of this building. I concluded that they were shooting at something. The fire department, you know, the engine 6 which is directly across the street from this, it is reported in the papers was fired upon, from where I don't know. I'm still trying to answer your question. No one has said to me or Mrs. Ward has not said that anyone has said to her that a sniper was in that building.

MR. LOFTON: Of course, I'm really interested also in the converse, whether or not the tenant feels there was any snipers in the building or whether or not they feel as though this firing on the building was done without provocation. Have you had any reports in terms of those kinds of statements made by tenants?

MR. CANNON: Not from a tenant living in that building or the area that we are talking about. I've had a conversation with Mr. Stile who has been in contact, and I had a contact with one of the employees, I remember, who made the statement that they were shooting from the building. This



is one of the boiler room attendants who made that statement, "there is guys in the building shooting," he said. Now, what he meant by that, who knows.

MR. BROWN: What was his name?

MR. CANNON: Cook.

MR. BROWN: Is he a boiler maintenance man?

MR. CANNON: He's a boiler room attendant.

MR. BROWN: Negro or white?

MR. CANNON: Negro. The statement was the general condemnation that they were shooting in the building and guys were shooting at each other. Whether he had any facts to go upon, I don't know.

MR. GIBBONS: Did you hear any tenants comment about the pictures that appeared in Life of an alleged sniper?

MR. CANNON: No, I haven't as far as tenants are concerned.

MR. BROWN: Could you identify that apartment?

MR. CANNON: I saw the Life article,



but as I recall there was nothing pertaining to Hayes Homes in the Life article. It was a picture of Avon Avenue in the area of Belmont, down to -- what is that, where the boy is lying on the street?

MR. GIBBONS: The picture in the apartment you couldn't identify?

MR. LOFTON: There is a picture in the Life article which supposedly depicted a sniper sitting near a window with a carbine in his hand.

MR. CANNON: I remember when I was looking at that picture I was trying to size it up by the window if there was a screen and so forth. If I were to give you my opinion, that was not a public housing apartment.

MR. LOFTON: Is it the housing guards that patrol the grounds of the Hayes Homes?

MR. CANNON: Yes.

MR. LOFTON: And approximately how many housing patrolmen are there that patrol Hayes Homes?

MR. CANNON: There are six in that immediate area, but three primarily are five men that are assigned to Hayes Homes. We should say on that though that two of these men were only added in the month of June Prior



to that it was four men. You see, they've been hurting for officers all along.

MR. LOFTON: How many buildings are in the Hayes complex?

MR. CANNON: Eleven plus one administration building.

MR. BROWN: And it's twelve stories high?

MR. CANNON: Yes. You see, their shifts had been to come on at four o'clock, one tour was four to twelve and another tour was from eight to three, something like that. When I first went to Hayes Homes this was one of the things that I went over to see Captain Zizzo about and he was in agreement with me that we needed additional personnel, and then on or about the end of May or early June two new officers came on. One of them was this Rizzillo and another young man named Plesson, they were started on a tour from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon. So, therefore, you had coverage eight in the morning to four, four to twelve, eight p.m. to three p.m., which gave us better service. But, you see, with these shifts varying when certain men are on there is more production. When I say production in terms of housing, more kids are kept in line as



far as playing in the halls or playing with the elevators or this sort of thing, or you can't say anything about the inside of the apartment where the disturbances occur because usually the precinct is called before the housing guards are called on that. So it gave us better coverage, let's put it that way, and production. But the obvious point here is whether it is adequate. No, in my opinion it is not adequate.

MR. BROWN: Has there been an after action report compiled by housing on any of these factors?

MR. CANNON:: This is customary procedure following any sort of incident where there has been damage, the managers are required to make them.

MR. BROWN: They include witnesses statements and so forth?

MR. CANNON: No, usually is just a sort of narrative report, chronological report made by the manager to the best of his recollection of what happened and give an estimate of the damages suffered and go on record the fact that you are under way for, you know, repairs.

CHAIRMAN LILLEV: Is there anything further you'd like to say?

MR. CANNON: No, I think one thing



only. I know what the announced purpose of the commission is and I had a couple of questions that seemed to be asking, "how do I size up the situation?" I am as confused as to what caused this as anything, as any other person. But, you know, the old National Guard training and etcetera about controlling riots and what not. The night in front of that precinct, the manner in which the incident of the picketing of the youngsters and the gathering of the people was handled I think was not the cause but the final straw. Someone in that crowd threw -- because of the way it was being handled -- threw something at the precinct and then others followed up on that.

MR. LOFTON: How was it being handled?

MR. CANNON: Here again I'm trying to put myself in the position of whoever was in charge of that precinct, and I got a group of people over there who are gathering and who are not necessarily breaking the law but there is potential trouble, what would I do? I certainly think that earlier in the afternoon I would have tried to go out in some sort of way, not arrest them but persuade those kids to leave from my precinct. This is a serious business building here. Now, there are semifications, you know, constitutions, right to protest, all this is involved, but I think that some officer



might possibly have been able to discourage this. Here again, I can only assume some responsibility, I don't know whether any tenants were in that, but I didn't go over to find out. If I had gone over to find out, maybe there might have been one or two kids in there that I could have persuaded to go on home.

All right, this element and then the additional element of the command, it had to be a command, they didn't respond just as a man the command to leave the interior of the precinct and come out charging on the crowd, I didn't see this but I saw this on TV.

MR. BROWN: Did you ever see the police come out and try to circulate, persuade and in any way inform themselves in trying to handle the crowd that particular day?

MR. CANNON: No, I didn't.

MR. LEUCHTER: Were you out there a fair amount of the time?

MR. CANNON: Back and forth, not over immediately as close as I am to this gentleman here, but up to where I could get a view of what was happening that way and a view of what was happening that way. Up until approximately five thirty, six o'clock I was doing this. And after that I



stayed in that maintenance room near that phone.

MR. BROWN: Did anybody come down from the housing authority?

MR. CANNON: I was the housing authority, I was there.

MR. BROWN: Didn't you ask for help?

MR. CANNON: No, I didn't ask for help.

MR. BROWN: Was it S.O.P. of a housing authority if the manager thinks there is trouble brewing, are you supposed to handle it, fifteen hundred people?

MR. CANNON: Yes.

MR. LOFTON: I'm trying to ascertain, Mr. Cannon, in terms of that Thursday after Wednesday night which obviously so much involved on that Wednesday night activity within the Hayes Homes, I'm trying to ascertain whether or not there was any communication between the law enforcement contingents and those persons responsible for the administration of the Hayes Homes attempting to see what can be done?

MR. CANNON: I had no conversations with no one pertaining to what happened Wednesday night. No conversations at all.

MR. BROWN: But Thursday night at six



o'clock did you call the Housing, the police?

MR. CANNON: Not the police, I called
and I spoke to Mr. Danzig.

MR. BROWN: You told Danzig?

MR. CANNON: I told Mr. Danzig about
every significant thing. I told him about the leaflets earlier
in the afternoon that I had gotten, I told him about the fact
that people were beginning to assemble on 12th Avenue. I told
him that people had -- I could see people on the roofs now.
That was not all one conversation, this was two or three con-
versations. I told him, you know, I told you the kind of things
he was telling me about seeing the people get in and so forth.
I told him in my last conversation, I remember, and this was
after the thing had really started and the kids were really
surging through and they had hit G.E. and they had burned a
couple of cars, I told him I was going to keep the man that I
had on duty in the maintenance office for absolute emergency if
I had to do something I would. I was not going to go out and
try to crush a riot.

MR. BROWN: What did he say to you?

MR. CANNON: "Do the best you can."

MR. BROWN: You told him that cars were



already burning and people were surging through the place, and he told you to do the best you can? What was his tone?

MR. CANNON: Certain. I learned subsequent to that that both Danzig and Siballeto, who was on vacation, had been in touch.

MR. LOFTON: I would assume in a complex like a housing project, normally there are pockets of leadership which the other kids normally gravitate around, is that true of the Hayes Homes?

MR. CANNON: I think this is true in the way you put it.

MR. LOFTON: My second question is, are you familiar with who these teenagers may be, by name?

MR. CANNON: One or two I may know.

MR. LOFTON: What I'm getting at is in case the commission may want to talk to a person who may be one of these natural teenage leaders.

MR. CANNON: Could I supply some names? Yes, I think.

MR. BROWN: Now, Mrs. Ward. She's more likely to be in touch, isn't she, in this particular zone?

MR. CANNON: In the area of 302



Hunterdon Street where the shooting occurred.

MR. BROWN: She'd be, she'd have a lot
to say?

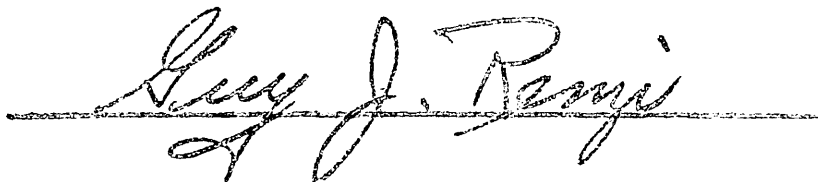
MR. CANNON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN LILLEY: I think if we are
all agreed, Mr. Cannon, you've been with us a long time, you've
come after work and you've been very helpful. Thank you very
much.

(Hearing then ended.)

* * * * *

I, Guy J. Renzi, do hereby certify
that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of testi-
mony taken at the time and place hereinbefore mentioned.


A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Guy J. Renzi", is written over a horizontal line.