

Notes - Police Commission Meeting, August 21, 1975

-Williams: "Councilman Yaroslavsky has chosen to make some rather unfortunate statements indicating that Council members may have a higher degree of responsibility to the public than members of this Commission..." (1)

-Williams: "As the Commission stated several weeks ago, because of the national importance of the investigation concerning the death of Senator Kennedy, we believe that the public should have full and free access to all information gathered during the Department's investigation so long as the rights of privacy of individuals involved are protected and the ability of the Department to effectively enforce the law is not seriously impaired. I think it should be understood that this is not mere rhetoric, but it truly represents the view of the Commission and the Commissioners individually." (1-2)

-W: "As Councilman Yaroslavsky knows, the Commission had already indicated its willingness to set up procedures to cooperate with those requesting information concerning the death of Senator Kennedy."

-W: "All of those statements of eyewitnesses to the shooting of Senator Kennedy are available to be reviewed on court order... I think it should be pointed out that those statements were marked for identification in the trial of Sirhan Sirhan, although they were not entered into evidence in that trial, and to the best of our knowledge the statements that were marked for identification are the only statements that were ever taken of any eyewitnesses to the death of Senator Kennedy. (sic) Chief Gates, do you concur with that?" Gates: "I concur completely with that..." (This is complete nonsense. By no means are all the eyewitness statements in the trial exhibits.) (2-3)

-W: "... the Commission has already indicated that it will answer specific questions posed to the Commission with respect to the investigation of the death of Senator Kennedy..." (3)

-Phaelzer: "I want to give full and free access to every bit of information about this subject that we can possibly give..." (4)

-Dion Morrow of the City Attorney's office was present and spoke at this meeting and was consulted by the PC in their deliberations on a policy. (5)

- "I guess that there were literally hundreds of still photographs that were taken of the scene of Senator Kennedy's shooting and of Senator Kennedy, and they are available. Many of the still photographs that were taken during the investigation were marked... With respect to the photographs that the Department has in its possession we are not reluctant to make those photographs available in the same manner that we will answer questions with respect to the investigation. If we are apprised of the general nature of the inquiry with respect to the photographs we will try to make all photographs falling into that -- into that area of inquiry available." (Gates concurs) (14)

-W: "The photographs I made reference to were photographs taken of the scene and of the Senator while at the scene." (14)

-W: "Now with respect to the written questions that the Commission has previously indicated that the Department would answer with respect to the death of Senator Kennedy such questions should be submitted in writing to the secretary of the Board of Police Commission... The Commission will designate one Commissioner... who will work with an Assistant Chief,... and two investigators, and a member of the City Attorney's Office to answer the questions that are posed in the form that I have previously indicated... Now to the extent that further answers beyond the answers that we give in writing are requested, the team... may be available to meet with the individual and the entities requesting the further information..." (15)

-W: "I would like to ask that the City Council direct any further requests with respect to this investigation to the Police Commission and I can assure the City Council that we will respond just as speedily and fully as possible." (15)

-Montenegro: "I hope that this particular meeting has dispelled the sinister feeling that there is a conspiracy, and I am very pleased that we are open - material open to the general public..." (15-16)

-Pfaelzer: "This is a particularly unique case, and I wouldn't expect or think that Chief Gates would either that we would intend to stand on technicalities. So, that should be made clear. We want the questions to be sincere and we will give sincere answers to them. I think you will agree, Chief Gates." Gates: "Absolutely."