

SEPTEMBER 29, 2004

REGULAR MEETING

The Police Commission of the City and County of San Francisco met in the Mission District, Sanchez Elementary School, 325 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, at 6:00 p.m., in a Regular Meeting.

PRESENT: Commissioners Renne, Orr-Smith, Chan, Keane, Sparks,
Veronese

ABSENT: Commissioner Marshall

Commissioner Renne thanked Captain Goldberg for having the Commission in the Mission District.

CHIEF'S REPORT

a. Review of Recent Activities

Chief Fong introduced the members of the Command Staff: Deputy Chiefs Pengel, Suhr, Parra, and Commanders Craig, Shinn, Puccinelli, and Harper were present.

Chief Fong also stated that there will be a presentation by Alexandra Villa, Sr. Clubhouse Director of the Columbia Park Boys and Girls Club. Ms. Villa will make a presentation about the collaboration between Mission Station and the Boys and Girls Club.

Ms. Alexandra Villa explained that the Boys and Girls clubs, their duties and functions and they are in eight neighborhood in the city where it is needed the most. She stated that they are the oldest organization in the Mission, 110 years and going. She showed a video as part of her presentation. She thanked Deputy Chief Suhr for his support in the organization. She also thanked the POA, Captain Corrales and Chief Suhr for their donation in helping send kids to camp. She also recognized Officer Steve Thoma for all his help.

Chief Fong made the following statement: "Commissioners, I would like to leave you with a few words this evening in concluding my comments. It has been said that working as a police officer is one of the most complex jobs in American society. Add to that, the intricacies of working in the City and County of San Francisco, and it should be clear that our occupation is highly challenging and yet also highly rewarding.

I understand the realities that face the members of this Department. Thousands of calls and hundreds of investigations are handled on a daily basis by the men and women of the San Francisco Police Department. This is what we are trained to do. This is what we are expected to do and this is what we will continue to do and do to the best of our ability.

I also appreciate how our actions are often times the subject of public scrutiny. This is appropriate and necessary. We are committed to improving the way that we work. We are constantly seeking new ways to improve our community partnerships and we welcome constructive criticisms from all quarters. We do not invite or endorse, however, comments that paint the actions of our officers with a broad brush. Those kinds of generalities are neither accurate nor are they productive to the dialogue that we wish to maintain with all groups. I also cannot see any reason to draw a parallel with the tragic terrorists takeover of a Russian school in which hundreds of innocent children were killed. Such an analogy, whatever the motivation, is offensive and without foundation.

I must, however, tell you that I and many other members of the Police Department have been personally affected and troubled by these recent remarks. Although we take exception to the remarks that were made, the officers of this Department will not stop doing their job. We are not throwing in the towel. Be assured though that we will not be distracted from our

obligations by words that are best unfounded and ill-considered. I'm confident that the high quality of work done by the members of this Department will continue. Our commitment to working cooperatively with the Police Commission, the Office of Citizen Complaints, and each and every community remains strong. We will continue to do our job in a manner that is professional, exemplary, and free from any hint of bias, intolerance, or prejudice. We cannot afford to let controversial statements interfere with the critical services that we provide to the people of the City and County of San Francisco.

Let me state clearly that the officers of this Department take their duty with the utmost seriousness. Let there be no doubt that we will not shirk our responsibility to answer when called. We will not shrink from danger or uncertainty. We will not – excuse me – we will continue to protect those who are most in need. The dedication of San Francisco Police Officers to the highest standards of conduct remains and is unwavering. Whatever remarks have been made about us and our character, our mission remains the same. We intend to hold fast to our solemn oath to serve and protect the people of this great City.”

Commissioner Renne thanked Chief Fong for her remarks. She also announced that Supervisor Tom Amianno is present.

Commissioner Keane made the following statement: “If I had stated that I believed that the members of the San Francisco Police Department were racists or that they acted in a racist way at the Thurgood Marshall School, I would indeed owe you and the City and County of San Francisco an apology and I would also owe you my resignation. I did not say that. If I had stated that the activities of the San Francisco Police Officers at Thurgood Marshall was similar to the activities of the people who took over a Russian school, I would owe you and the people of San Francisco an apology and I would also owe you my resignation. I did not say that.

My remarks have been totally twisted and distorted for the purpose of – I'll leave the purposes to all of you to – but I'll tell you what I did say and I'll let you be the judge and then I'll talk about a couple of things regarding some of the things that have been said about my remarks over the course of the last few weeks.

For two weeks, for two different sessions, we, the members of the Commission listened to testimony from students, from staff, from parents from Thurgood Marshall about an incident that happened two years ago and in my opinion, the Police Commission should have looked into two years ago and aired at the time and was derelict to our community in not looking into it. We gave a full hearing to the students, to the teachers, to the staff, to the parents, to everyone else who wanted to discuss what happened at Thurgood Marshall.

We listened to an incident in which two students got into a fight and we heard and we watched the video tape of close to a hundred officers coming through Thurgood Marshall School, going and occupying the hallways of the school, and sending out from their school all of the students of Thurgood Marshall at 11:00 o'clock in the morning, 14, 15, 16 year old students out into the streets, driving them from the school, using, in effect, the kind of crowd control tactics that we would expect in regard to some of the major incidents that we see to get these young men and women, these children out of Thurgood Marshall.

We then listened to – well, my remarks were I recall my daughter at Lowell High School in the western part of the City, and I recall a fight there one day in which one young man in fact split open another student's head with a club from a steering wheel. That was handled by one SRO and a squad car. My remarks were that it was inconceivable to me – and I think everyone in that audience – that that kind of response that was happening at Thurgood Marshall would happen at Lowell High School or to a high school in the western part of the city. And the people who were raising the questions of whether or not racism indeed is an issue or may have been an issue in regard to the totality of

that approach, one could not shrug off those observations.

I said that racism in our society is subtle. It can be unconscious. It's there and we have to look at it and we have to admit it and we have to look into our own hearts no matter what we do. I know I myself as a 61 year old person having grown up in this country and trying as best I can to make sure that racism is not part of my life. I know it's there. I know I slip into it. I know all of us do. And I think we have to confront it honestly as a factor and not twist it and say that Peter Keane said all of the police who responded that day were racists and they're involved in racists factions because I did not say that and now I put it in context.

In regard to the other remark that I said, I talked about the fact that in listening to the children who had been at Thurgood Marshall, who talked of the great pride that they had in their school, and how these are kids from a hard scrabble community in Bayview and it was the one place of refuge that they had in life to find an education, to get out of their circumstances, is a place of safety, it was a place that they had great love for. And they were talking about how their feeling of safety – these were the students telling us this – those were gone. Their feelings now were feelings of fear about their school and they had lost something very precious in their lives because of that. And I said that clearly I am not at all comparing the two incidents in terms of the terrible heinousness of what happened in Southern Russia, but in listening and watching television and watching and listening to the comments of the children from the school in Southern Russia, I was struck by the dramatic and sad fact that many of the things that they were saying were the things that those students told us that they felt about their experience after having come in to Thurgood Marshall, after having had that incident at Thurgood Marshall.

That's what I said. Since that time and over the course of the last few days, there are members of the organization, for whatever purposes – you know the politics of your organization, I don't. You know what the motivations may be as to what's going on – who took those remarks which I have just told you and said Keane said the officers, all the officers who went there were racists. All the officers of the San Francisco Police Department were racists and Keane said that those police who went there acted like the terrorists who went to Russia.

You are mature professionals. You should not allow yourselves, and I don't think you will because I have great respect for all of you, to be manipulated by – to be manipulated by whatever motivations people might have in going ahead and casting those remarks in that way. Whether they be people running for political office in our town or people doing other things politically within the San Francisco Police Department. I call upon you to be professional. I call upon you to be discriminating and I call upon you to go ahead and act with the kind of judgment that I know you do have.

I worked with the San Francisco Police Department in the Criminal Justice System for 30 years. I have tremendous respect for the members of the San Francisco Police Department. I have enormous respect for their professionalism, for their service to San Francisco, and to their judgment. I serve on this Police Commission and I see people like Chief Heather Fong whose remarks I endorse in regard to the totality of them with the exception of whatever implications about the role of my remarks if they were. I endorse them totally. I see the Department itself having taken a great lesson from Thurgood Marshall. People like Greg Suhr who went to community meetings again and again and answered the concerns of the community about Thurgood Marshall. People like Colleen Fatooh whose work with the SROs and there are a number of protocols and procedures to make sure those things do not happen again. And the Department has changed its procedure to make sure those things will not happen again. In all of those things, I commend the Police Department in the day to day work of the San Francisco Police Department. I commend it. I'm proud of the San Francisco Police Department. I'm proud of this job of being on the Police Commission. We are an independent and new Commission. We're going to continue being independent. We're going to continue to be new, and I'd like to challenge the

POA in a sense that I want to write an article for the POA publication on my side of all this and I challenge you to publish it. I would like it published. When all of these things are put in that context, I can take whatever it is that you want to throw at me. I'll take it in whatever context. I will not resign. I will not apologize. I've done nothing to resign or I've done nothing to apologize for. I'll continue to serve on this Commission. I'll serve honestly, fairly, and call things as I see it. Thank you."

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Gary Delagnes, POA President, asked Commissioner Keane to review the transcripts of last week meeting. He stated that he is honored to represent the men and women of the San Francisco Police Department. He addressed the Commission and particularly Commissioner Keane regarding comments that were made during last week's Commission meeting in regards to the Thurgood Marshall School incident.

Lea Millitello, Pride Alliance, addressed the Commission in regards to comments made by Commissioner Keane. She stated that the Commission heard testimony from students, faculty, school board members and community members in regards to the Thurgood Marshall incident but the Commission did not hear from the officers that responded and who were present at the event.

Unidentified addressed Commissioner Keane regarding comments made at last week's meeting and asked Commissioner Keane to resign and to apologize.

Unidentified discussed concerns that she came to the meeting thinking that it was a community meeting. She stated that the Police should take responsibility for their actions.

Gabe Harp, retired SFPD member, addressed the Commission and stated that it's not the officers that kill, it is family who kills family. He stated that focus should be on the children.

Lisa Torres, SFPD SRO officer at Hoover Middle School, addressed the Commission and stated that in September 2002, she accepted the SRO position at Thurgood Marshall High School. She stated that she was shocked by the mixed reception she got on her first day. She also discussed the reaction from Mr. Peoples in regards to her presence in the school. She stated that students were in the hall being defiant, swearing at staff, and cutting class. She stated that she observed verbal altercations between students in the halls and students assaulting staff members. She stated that on October 11, 2002, her only intention was to render aid to all students and stated that she had come to realized that the students she encountered that day did not view officers as assistance but as their enemy. She stated that her efforts to help that day was prejudged by students as if her only role as a police officer is to lock kids up.

Unidentified, second officer with Thurgood Marshall, stated that it is heartbreaking because he grew up right down the hill from Thurgood Marshall and he went to Thurgood Marshall in junior high school. He stated that kids at Thurgood Marshall are out of control. He stated that he saw teachers calling officers derogatory names during the Thurgood Marshall incident. He stated that he is not a racist and he is proud to be a San Francisco Police Officer.

Unidentified directed her comments to Commissioner Keane. She read a statement in regards to Commissioner Keane's comments. She asked for an apology not only for the officers of SFPD but for the parents in Russia.

Daniel Paez, People Against Police State, discussed concerns regarding actions of police against him. He stated there are good cops in the city but there are also cops that are psychopaths and very dangerous people that abuse their position.

Sergeant Dan Linehan, 28-year member of the SFPD, addressed Commissioner Keane and stated that his comments are a trend and discussed comments Commissioner Keane made during an interview with Ron Owens. He asked Commissioner Keane not only to apologize but to resign as Commissioner.

Steve Curry, President of the Outer Mission Residents Association,

addressed the Commission. He stated that SRO officers are unbelievable and stated that he read the transcripts in regards to Commissioner Keane's comments. He demanded a formal apology from Commissioner Keane for the insulting remarks and asked for Commissioner Keane's resignation and asked the Commission to see the video tribute to Officer Isaac Espinoza.

Julian Hill, President of Officers for Justice, stated that several years ago he applied to be an SRO and was chosen to be an SRO at A.P. Giannini. He stated there was not a lot of events where he had to call for assistance but there were some. He stated that it was a good feeling that when he called for assistance, someone showed up. He stated that he would rather have 100 people show up to help him as a peace officer than not have anyone show up. He stated that for those officers who do show up when he calls for assistance, his family, his friends, and his children thank them everyday. He stated that the OFJ is outraged and appalled that Commissioner Keane made comments to compare the response from the Bayview officers and the Sheriff's Department and other officers that were out on that day as something similar to the incident in Russia. He demanded an apology from Commissioner Keane for comments made.

Rudy Corpus, Gang Prevention Counselor and coordinator of youth program at Balboa High School called United Players, discussed concerns and stated that the 10 years he's been working at Balboa High School has had a big transition from negative to positive and one of the reasons for that transition is because of the SRO officer that is there. He commended Officer Dave Bardoni for saving a lot of lives as the SRO officer in Balboa High. He stated that the SROs, the school administration and community group organizations should work together to alleviate violence in the schools.

Jim Dierky, Principal of Visitation Valley and President of the United Administrators of San Francisco representing 235 school administrators, addressed the Commission and stated that the SRO program, the relationship between the Police Department and the School Department is a wonderful thing. He stated that he was on the Commission that was appointed by the Superintendent of Schools which represented all different kinds of people on Thurgood Marshall. He stated that they met many times and none of them came with up with the conclusion of Commissioner Keane. He stated that a change should be made on the Commission.

Claudia Anderson, Bayview Hunters Point resident, stated that education is the key to social change and she believes that community policing is the key to the building of relationships that bring about social change and stated that the SRO Program is one of the best examples of community policing, education, and bringing about positive social change. She acknowledged Lt. Fatooh, Officers Cavanaugh, Burke, Anton, Torres, and Neitz. She thanked them and all the others in the SRO Program.

Gilma Morales, Assistant Principal at Thurgood Marshall, stated that after the last Commission meeting an officer came up to her and asked her how she felt about having police officers in their schools. She stated that her response to her was that "everyday grandparents, mothers, fathers, guardians send their children to my school, to the school administration and I. They trust the lives of their children to us, and people like Officer Bell, people like Officer Torres, Lt. Fatooh, Officer Valenzuela, Officer Breen have helped me and my administration keep that promise to our community."

Ethel Newland, St. Johns Educational Threshold Center in the Mission, stated that she has spent the last 15 years or more trying to build better relations between youth and the police. She stated that she work very closely with Mission Police Station and the POA to build these better relations. She stated that they have built trust, friendship, and hopefully inspired youth to do good things with their lives. She stated that irresponsible remarks by people who are in position of power and authority who were appointed to provide impartial objective oversight of the Police Department make her job hard. She stated that an apology is owed not only to the officers and the Police Department but also to people who has worked with youth trying to bring youth and the police together because they now have to rebuild relationships

that took them five to 25 years to build.

Earl Merriweather, Assistant Principal at John O'Connell High School, stated that he is here to support both the SRO Program and the SRO Program specifically at John O'Connell High School and stated that he and his students feel safe having his SRO officer in the school.

Matt Balzarini, Police Officer, addressed the Commission and stated that in 2001 he was transferred to the Bayview District where he faced verbal abuse daily. He was one of the officers who responded at Thurgood Marshall. He stated that, like everyone, he will never forget that day. He stated that the comments made by Commissioner Keane were irresponsible, inappropriate, and disrespectful to him. He stated that the incident was not about race. The incident was about disorderly conduct and young adults that had no regard for the law or anyone there giving direction. He stated that he and another officer tried to instruct the students to leave the area and go outside. He stated that they were ignored and at one point trampled. The other officer and he ended up on the ground and were kicked several times. The other officer was off on disability for six months with a broken finger and an injured back.

Greg Corrales, Captain of Police and a 35-year member of the SFPD, thanked Chief Fong for her remarks and expressed support for the SRO program. He discussed concerns regarding the comments made by Commissioner Keane.

Unidentified demanded justice and accountability for Cammerin Boyd. She stated that Cammerin Boyd had his hand above his head but the police shot him anyway.

Richard Cairns, retired Captain with 32 years of service with the SFPD, stated that his daughter was a teacher at Thurgood Marshall so he knows a little bit about the school. He addressed Commissioner Keane and asked for his resignation.

Vivian, inner Mission resident, stated that she has worked with police and found them responsive and caring. She stated that Commissioner Keane has not only insulted the Police Department and the individual policemen but also those who have worked with the community and those who trust the police officers.

Mary Harris, President of District 11 Council and OMI Neighbors in Action, stated that tonight's opening remarks and film was beautiful. She stated that it represents the response she has always gotten from the officers from Taraval and Ingleside Station as well as from the POA. She addressed Commissioner Keane and stated that he has said impartial remarks. She stated that if Commissioner Keane does not apologize to the Command Staff and the Police Officers, she will ask her community and her council to join her and Steve Currier and ask the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors for his resignation.

Chris Bowman stated that he's known Commissioner Keane for over 20 years. He stated that he was shocked and disturbed from what he has heard here today. He stated that it's important for this Commission assert its leadership collectively and that the written transcript of last week's meeting be made public. He stated that there needs to be a way to bring the Commission back together and restore trust between the Commission, the Community, and the people that the Commission oversee. He stated that this Commission should support the SRO program.

Nelson Lum, SFPD member, President of San Francisco Asian Peace Officers Association, stated that the APOA is in complete agreement with the POA's demand that Commissioner Keane should apologize and resign.

Belinda Kerr, 19-year veteran of SFPD, member of OFJ and the Women Officers Network, stated that she supports the POA and that Commissioner Keane owes the City and the Department an apology and that he should resign.

Barbara George stated that SRO officers should be kept in the schools. She stated that she has 16 grandchildren with six in San Francisco schools. She stated that the relationships that the officers create is very good for the children. She stated that she has a relationship with the SFPD and that her son

was murdered and the officers have been compassionate and supportive and that she appreciates the Police Department and feels safe in this City.

Commissioner Chan made the following statement: “Thank you, Madam President. I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the meeting at this point of our proceedings. We heard from speakers who I fear are far more eloquent than I in speaking to the issues at hand. However, I think the public is entitled to at least a glimmer or a glimpse into the thought of at least one Commissioner on this panel by way of response to, not only this hearing, but the previous two sessions that have pertained to the incident of Thurgood Marshall High School.

First of all, let me state that I endorse fully the comments previously made by the Chief regarding the subject matter of this meeting thus far. My fellow Commissioners will recall that my support to have a full and fair hearing of the still outstanding grievances by certain members of the Thurgood Marshall High School community was predicated on this Commission’s commitment to explore the need for policy reforms stemming from the incident of October 11th, 2002. My initial concerns about the scope of such hearings were prompted by the blatant misrepresentation by School Board Commissioner Mark Sanchez regarding this Commission’s and the Department’s handling of this matter.

As my colleagues may recall, Commissioner Sanchez alleged in his letter to President Renne of May 25th, 2004, the quote “there has been no official response nor act upon the request” by the Board of Education for the Police Commission to investigate possible police misconduct at the high school.

The facts and the record before us indicate otherwise, and while my review of the record is still continuing, last week, as you know, Lieutenant Colleen Fatooh reported in great detail as to the catalog of affirmative steps being taken to address both policy and procedural issues that were implicated as a result of the unfortunate events of October 11th.

In a letter dated March 5th, 2003, moreover, then Police Commission President Connie Perry proposed a joint hearing on the Marshall High incident to be held by members of the Board of Education and the Police Commission. This proposal preceded the Board of Education’s official request for an outside investigation by a week. Moreover, this Commission’s records indicate that in spite of several telephone conversations from former Commission Secretary Lieutenant Edward Geeter, the School District failed to respond with any alternative proposal if indeed it was dissatisfied with this Commission’s suggested format of a joint hearing.

I will not condone or condemn the perceived failings of any of my predecessors on the Police Commission. However, I believe that my fellow Commissioners, the Command Staff, and OCC have expressed in various ways their intent to examine the need for revisions to the Department’s policies.

Our prior hearings have demonstrated a serious commitment to reform both the manner and nature of the Department’s future response to non-weapon fights on high school campuses and the promulgation of crowd control policies that are tailored to the student population and the closed confines of a school environment. Toward that end, it is my opinion we have made a commendable start by reopening this matter and soliciting public comment at two prior meetings including this one. Moreover, we have received from the Office of Citizen Complaints the Best Practices Review and Recommendations of September 13th, 2004 and I look forward to an open and vigorous analysis and debate regarding the OCC’s recommendations.

That debate, however, is hardly served by incendiary demands for apologies for allegedly racist conduct that may have occurred more than two years ago. First, the record before us in this matter and as of this date does not yet support an apology by this Commission or the Department. In the aftermath of the incident, the Office of Citizen Complaints interviewed at least 47 officers and concluded last spring that there was insufficient evidence to prove or disprove specific allegations of individual police misconduct. The

OCC, moreover, found the Department's use of crowd control tactics was within Department guidelines. Second, I will not stand by quietly while Commissioner Sanchez attempts to use this Commission to deflect criticism away from himself and his colleagues on the Board of Education for their role in the Marshall High School incident. I find it interesting that the Board of Education resolution of March 11th, 2003 makes no apology of its own deficiencies with respect to the district's managerial shortcomings that contributed to the incident. In fact, the December 2002 report of the School District's own Community Task Force found, and I quote, "that all information related to the October 11th, 2000 incident (must made a typo) demonstrates that there was a failure of communication and a lack of coordinated response by site administrators, faculty, staff, and central staff personnel." A finding that was clearly ignored by the Board of Education's resolution. Third, an apology is normally used to express regret for a mistake or wrong with an implied admission of guilt or fault without palliating circumstances. Therefore, I am disinclined, particularly given the School Board's position, to indulge the apparent desire of another city agency and the corrosive and insidious re-election campaign of Board of Education Commissioner Sanchez and his ilk that the Department accept culpability or even liability for the unfortunate events at Marshall High.

Finally, some issues have no identifiable good guys or bad guys but they do point out that the system for conducting human relations at problematic school sites is dysfunctional. To repair that system we should support the fine work of SRO Coordinator Lieutenant Colleen Fatooh to move forward with the Department's immediate plan of action as outlined in her presentation to this Commission last week. We should also schedule, by date certain, additional discussion and hearings on the policy recommendations of the OCC and that should occur in a more deliberative and civil context.

We walk a fine line as Police Commissioners between our functions as policy making body in a quasi judicial panel. The search by this Commission for genuine policy reform I submit would be better served by avoiding the sort of histrionics and prejudicial and inflammatory rhetoric of which the people of San Francisco have witnessed far too much and have grown weary, and I thank you, Madam President."

Commissioner Veronese stated that it is rare that the Commission hear from the rank and file member of the Department and stated that it is a pleasure to hear from members of the rank and file of the Department. He stated that he heard from several perspective of witnesses that were there at the Thurgood Marshall incident. He stated that the Commission also saw a 40-minute video on the incident itself. However, the Commission did not hear from officers that had been kicked and officers that have had batons taken from them but the Commission did see some of the conduct of some of the students that were there. He briefly reviewed comments that he made last week for the sake of the audience that is present today. He stated that from the evidence that was presented to the Commission then and some of the evidence that has been presented to the Commission today, it is clear that the system had failed those children that day and it is also clear that the system had failed the Police Department that day. Commissioner Veronese stated that the system he is talking about is the system where students are allowed to fight in school or where police officers were even needed in schools. A system where a teacher fails at a time where leadership is most important. A system where students feel free to take batons from police officers and curse at them. A system that allows chaos to break out sending students into the streets. He stated that he is confident through the presentation of the Police Chief and Lt. Fatooh and the rest of the Police Department last week that this system is changing since Thurgood Marshall.

Commissioner Orr-Smith thanked Commissioner Chan for his observations and his request to calendar date certain the review of the OCC policy recommendations. Commissioner Orr-Smith explained that the

Commission's intention of reviewing the situation at Thurgood Marshall was to understand what took place there because it is something that had not been responded to by the previous Commission. She also stated that what has come out of this inquiry is to look at how we move forward and the Department has done an admirable job in examining itself. She stated that she is encouraged and proud of the Department for what it has done in this process. She stated that the Commission is pleased with the report from Lt. Fatooh, the Command Staff, Deputy Chief Suhr, and the Chief about the progress that's been made and the Commission supports the SRO program and they will continue to support that program and stated that the SRO program is needed now more than ever. She also stated that the next step is to calendar for date certain to review the OCC policy recommendations.

Commissioner Sparks thanked her fellow Commissioners in expressing their support for the Department. Commissioner Sparks explained that she apologized twice at last week's meeting. She apologized once because she believed that the Commission should have responded and had a fair and open hearing on the Thurgood Marshall incident prior to the 24-month period of time elapsing. She also, based on her experience with an incident she had during Vietnam war, apologized and said that it's very unfortunate that the students of Thurgood Marshall had to experience a traumatic incident as they did. Commissioner Sparks also stated that she tries very hard to be prepared for these meetings and that she spends a lot of time going over the background information, the transcripts, the Task Force Report, and the other various items that were presented relative to the Thurgood Marshall incident and she stated that no where in any of the incidences, in any of the reports, in any of the hearings, and in any of the statements did she see any evidence whatsoever of racism on behalf of the San Francisco Police Department. She also stated that the San Francisco Police Department is the most diverse Police Department in the United States and has a very percentage of officers of African-Americans, of Latinos, of Asians, of gays and lesbians, highest percentage of gays and lesbian officers of any Department in the United States. She stated that she believes that the fundamental basis for this Department is one of fairness and one of professionalism. She stated that she does not believe that this Department participates or has any element of racism to it. She also stated, with due respect to her fellow Commissioner, that she believes that the comments that were made relative to the Russian incident had no relevance whatsoever to the Thurgood Marshall incident. She stated that she believes that Commissioner Keane is an honest and fair man and an honorable man. She stated that she does not believe that he tried to cast any type of comparison to the two incidents as having any similarities but she does believe that even mentioning that incident in the same breath as the Thurgood Marshall incident was a breach of confidence and a lack of judgment. She stated that Commissioner Keane has said that what is perceived that what he said is not what he meant and she would ask that if that is the case that an apology would be in order for him to state that he would be sorry that there is any misperception whatsoever in whether his comments had any similarities of comparing Thurgood Marshall to the events in the Soviet Union.

Commissioner Renne explained that she has been general counsel for the School District until recently and as a result she has not been able to participate in the hearings on the Thurgood Marshall incidents. She stated that Thurgood Marshall for many has become a political football. She find that, for the children of this City, to be truly regrettable. She stated that the children in this City need a good education and they need adults to act like adults. She stated that the only way the children of this City are going to be served is if the schools and the Police Department are working together and what we call need to do is to strive to see how that partnership can continue and flourish. She stated that the SRO Program is critically needed and that we have to move beyond the Thurgood Marshall incident and get at the heart of the real problem and it would really help if some adults who are in charge act like adults.

Commissioner Keane made the following statement: “All of us learn many things in life. If we don’t we’re intransigent, we’re stubborn beyond any kind of real wisdom. And I listened very closely to a number of things that were said tonight by all of you and I learned from two people for whom I have enormous respect. I learned from Chief Fong who is, in my opinion, the best Chief I have seen during the many years I’ve been in San Francisco, the 40 years I’ve been here, and I learned from my colleague, Terry Sparks, in regard to my choice of using the Southern Russian incident in connection with describing the emotional effect upon the children. And again, I was trying to draw a sad parallel to us in San Francisco listening to the children from the Bayview say the same kinds of words that I was hearing children who had been brutalized I should say and you can see the two things. But in retrospect, one of the things that has been mentioned here a number of times tonight is I’m a lawyer. I’m a trial lawyer. Trial lawyers say things for emphasis. I feel it’s important to emphasize the things that I observed about Thurgood Marshall and the opinions that I have and I try to use as much emphasis as I could because of my background, because of my training, because of my instincts. I realize now though in using the comparison of Southern Russia in any way, after listening to my colleague, Terry Sparks, and after listening to Chief Fong that I was wrong in doing that and for that I apologize.”

OCC DIRECTOR’S REPORT

a. Report on the function of the Office of Citizen Complaints

Ms. Jean Field, Senior Trial Attorney of OCC, for Director Allen who is in Russia on a goodwill mission learning about the Russian System of Justice and hopefully passing along the fine things that are done here. Ms. Field described the duties and responsibilities of the OCC.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements.

CAPTAIN JOHN GOLDBERG, COMMANDING OFFICER OF MISSION STATION, TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON THE POLICE ACTIVITIES IN THE MISSION DISTRICT

Commissioner Renne asked Captain Goldberg if he wants to be heard now or he could come to a meeting at City Hall, or the Commission can come back to the Mission at another time.

Commissioner Renne asked Captain Goldberg to go to a Commission meeting at City Hall to let everybody know what’s going on in the Mission District. Captain Goldberg stated that he would be pleased to do that.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

SCHEDULING OF ITEMS IDENTIFIED FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE COMMISSION MEETINGS

Commissioner Renne announced that the next few meeting will be very heavy.

Commissioner Sparks asked for an overview of future agenda items that will be coming up.

Thereafter, the meeting was adjourned.

Sergeant Joseph Reilly
Secretary
San Francisco Police Commission

1497/rct