

## TESTIMONY OF SUPERINTENDENT PHILIP SNOW

Metropolitan Ravensgate Assembly of Supervisors, Special Session, 5 April 2002

**Mayor Salome Throckmorton-d'Aubaine (Presiding):** The presiding chair will recognize Philip M. Snow, Superintendent of Public Safety. I wish to speak for the record on behalf of the Assembly and say that we are glad you are making a speedy recovery.

**Snow:** Thank you, Your Honor. The events of the past week leave me in no mood for a long preamble, so I'll cut to the chase. Ravensgate faces the challenge of cleaning up its collective act, and the police strike is an opportunity for some serious housecleaning.

**Assemblyman Orville Ketchum:** Your Honor, I have a question or two for Mr. Snow.

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** The presiding chair will recognize Mr. Ketchum from the Thirteenth Ward.

**Ketchum:** Mr. Snow, a time of war is no time to gut our police department. I demand to know, as do our citizens, why you think *now* is a good time. Also, you've been on the job over two years. Why are you suddenly a reformer?

**Snow:** Mr. Ketchum, any good cop will tell you you can't take action until you have probable cause or concrete evidence. The disk Romanyi compiled—and died for—that The Foundry discovered a decade later, provided ample evidence of entrenched corruption. Also, the assassination attempt triggered by the corruption investigations which resulted from—

**Ketchum:** Mr. Snow, you've been off the streets for 10 years. What gives you the right to sit in judgment of rank-and-file police officers who risk their lives daily?

**Snow:** I have been a police officer for 30 years and I am the recipient of 17 decorations for meritorious service or for valor. I've been on the street and know the challenges facing officers. That having been said, the Mayor and I have chosen to resolve this crisis *before* we continue campaigning. I would appreciate it, Mr. Ketchum, if you'd do the same. *[Pause.]* Our payroll is almost triple Seattle's, and their population is—

**Ketchum:** Seattle doesn't have our meta-human population. It wasn't downwind from Hanford, Trojan or the TPU Nuclear Research Reactor. We have seven times Seattle's waterfront, ample entryway for terrorists or drug dealers or Communist agitators. *Please* tell me why your current course of action *isn't* irresponsible to the point of treason.

**Snow:** Sure, if you'll let me finish.

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** Gentlemen! Mr. Snow, you have two *uninterrupted* minutes.

**Snow:** Thank you, Your Honor. We have hundreds of honest officers who put their lives on the line every day, but a cancer of corruption that's developed over the last 80 years overshadows their efforts. Our payroll includes detectives, patrolmen, parking enforcement officers, city park rangers, school and municipal-facility security guards and, oh yes, one *bureaucrat* for every four officers. Thanks to the police union, which I can't help but note may be liquidated under RICO, we've been burdened with four overlapping patrol shifts that spend their days writing twice as many tickets as the meter maids. We have one-and-a-half times Seattle's population, three times as many cops (before Monday), four times the crime, and our cops barely equal theirs in the actual number of arrests—or, per capita, we lag seriously behind—but, hey, we write a lot of tickets. I had on my payroll 27 union executives, from the guild president to the shop stewards, who did absolutely nothing but Guild business while collecting at least two paychecks—RBPS, the RPG and God only knows who else under the table.

Now, Mr. Ketchum made a very good point about the city's vulnerability to smugglers and terrorists. If we don't make the number of arrests to match the number of crimes, then what the hell are these guys doing during an eight-hour shift? Once we chop down all the dead wood, we'll be light about 1700 employees and I'll have in place a proactive command structure that will instill discipline, diligence and integrity.

**Assemblyman Mihaly Ciecznik:** Your Honor, I have questions.

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** The presiding chair will recognize Mr. Ciecznik from the Ninth Ward.

**Ciecznik:** Mr. Snow, where is this "dead wood" you are talking about?

**Ketchum:** I think it's at the *very top*, Mikey. We have serious leadership problems, which is why Phil's bailing out, running for mayor and testifying before the Sinclair Commission—.

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** Mr. Ketchum, you are *out of order* and way off base. Rampant corruption recently discovered predates Mr. Snow's tenure by—.

**Ketchum:** Young lady, I'm old enough to be your *grandfather*. Don't use that *tone* with your elders! Now, I've been around, Mr. Superintendent, and I know a *Snow* job when I see—.

**Cieznik:** Hey, don't I have questions, or is Orville having an aneurysm?

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** *Mr. Ketchum, you are out of order!!*

**Ketchum:** What questions do you have, Mikey?! Are we going to keep throwing him bi-partisan *softballs* instead of standing up for our police?! Why don't we ask him about his sweetheart deal with the Sinclair Commission?! Who's he selling out to save *his own neck*?!?!? Why doesn't the Mayor listen to her father and *fire* this walking disaster before we—?!

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** Sergeant-at-Arms, please turn off Mr. Ketchum's microphone—.

**Ketchum:** What about the Street Crimes Unit and the *twenty-one dead* in Rust City?! Why aren't those uniformed psychos in jail rotting—?! [*microphone goes dead*]

**Mayor d'Aubaine (Presiding):** Sergeant-at-Arms, remove Mr. Ketchum.

**Snow:** Mr. Ketchum is right that the dead wood is at the top. Three dozen department heads solved that problem for me when they resigned Sunday evening. Another dozen either are under indictment or have pleaded guilty, and I have accepted their resignations. I won't miss them.

**Cieznik:** Who will replace them?

**Snow:** I have plenty of sergeants, lieutenants and captains who are overdue for promotions. Also, I have selected 15 captains and unit commanders from six other jurisdictions for various command-level positions.

**Cieznik:** What about the reported abuses allegedly committed by the Street Crimes Unit?

**Snow:** The FBI and our own internal investigations have cleared them every time, and the Rust City videotapes exonerate them. Effective police officers have enemies, especially when they have such stellar accomplishments. Before I expanded SCU's scope of operations, we had the highest rate of gang violence in the nation. Two years later, we have the lowest and gang membership is down by thirty-six percent. In this town, a cop doesn't get respect unless he's forceful or takes a bribe. I don't tolerate selling one's badge, so I'm sorry if SCU was a little *rude* to some people—like the 31 dirty cops they busted in the process of taking down five street gangs, or those in Rust City who opened fire on SCU officers discharging their legal duty. [*Pauses*] For the record, Your Honor and Members of the Assembly, the preemptive gubernatorial pardons were well deserved, as are any medals we can pile upon them. You open fire on a cop, your survivors can collect the Darwin Award on your behalf. As you can see by the cast on my arm, I have some very strong feelings on this matter.

**Cieznik:** What plans do you have for reorganization?

**Snow:** I will reassign officers and consolidate the command structure to replace those leaving. We have 483 on administrative leave pending corruption investigations; about eighty percent are in the process of pleading guilty. Even at lesser charges, their law-enforcement careers are over. At County Lock-up, we have 171 strikers in custody awaiting processing. Another 316 officers are retiring or resigning to avoid strike-related criminal charges. We have another 267 officers who are still at large and, since they voided their contract by striking, have been off the job without calling in for five straight days. Under the legal definition of job abandonment, they resigned Wednesday and damn well better turn themselves in.

**Cieznik:** What will replace the union?

**Snow:** The various benevolent societies have met to build a new union. How that new union takes shape is up to the rank-and-file officers and our support for them across party lines and levels of government. I have spoken with the governor of this fine state, and he and I agree that my place for the next four years is *not* the Mayor's Office but right *here* building a new partnership comprising the Bureau, the community and elected officials. [*Pause, crowd reacts in shock.*] Your Honor, I look forward to continued service during your first full term and will give my all to help overcome our common challenges.