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54/08/17 No Suspect Wants to Talk to Them Now, Police Say

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No Suspect Wants to Talk to Them Now, Police Say

The release of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, accused of first-degree murder of his pregnant wife, is already "giving the police trouble," Detective Chief James McArthur said today.

He said one prisoner was refusing to talk to officers at all—"he insists he's no different than Dr. Sheppard."

"We have about 100 homicide cases a year," McArthur said. "Everyone arrested for murder will probably now insist that he's entitled to bail."

McArthur said he had never before heard of a first-degree murder defendant being released on bail before his preliminary hearing "by a judge who heard no evidence."

The detective chief's suggestion that the Cleveland Police Department might wash its hands of the Sheppard murder investigation was quickly repudiated by Safety Director John McCormick.

"This isn't a game that you can quit whenever the going is unpleasant," McCormick said. "We've made a commitment to Bay Village, and we will stay in this case to the end."

Detail Reduced

Mayor Celebrezze said, however, that the police have "exhausted all leads—everything has been checked out," and would now reduce the 15-man Sheppard murder detail.

He said Chief Frank W. Story would soon tabulate the cost of the investigation. The bill—that could run close to \$20,000, if the salaries of all men working on the case are included—will be presented to

Bay Village for payment.

The charge will amount to about \$2 for each resident of the West Side suburb.

Celebrezze said the Cleveland police have "completed the case," and are, in a sense, withdrawing—"but we'll be right back in if anything else develops."

Chief Story said he too, was surprised when Dr. Sheppard walked out of the County Jail after posting the \$50,000 bail set by Common Pleas Judge William K. Thomas.

Asked if he wished to comment on the criticism of his decision which permitted Sheppard's release on bail, Judge Thomas said:

"I stand on what I said in court yesterday. Beyond that, I have no comment."

"Get Off the Bench"

When the judge arrived at his chambers today he found his mail included an anonymous postcard lashing him for his ruling and a letter from an attorney congratulating him.

"Get off the bench, you don't belong there," said the postcard writer. "Get a job sweeping streets."

And the attorney wrote: "Please accept my congratulations on the competency and fortitude you demonstrated by coming to grips with the constitutional considerations involved in the Sheppard murder case."

"Well, at least their opinions were evenly divided," Judge Thomas said.