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54/07/20 Mayor Puts 2 Detectives on Slaying

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Mayor Puts 2 Detectives on Slaying

4-20-59
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Mayor Celebrezze today denounced "lack of central authority" in the investigation of the murder of Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard.

Although Mrs. Sheppard was slain in Bay Village, he said, the mystery is known throughout the nation as a "Cleveland murder case," and the city's law enforcement reputation is suffering.

"The killer is still loose," Celebrezze asserted, "and is no respecter of political boundary lines."

Therefore, the mayor ordered Safety Director John McCormick and Police Chief Frank W. Story to keep two homicide detectives assigned full-time to assist Prosecutor Frank T. Cullitan in the Sheppard case.

Celebrezze said Cleveland would also make "the services of our expert homicide squad interrogators, all technical advice, and full use of our scientific crime laboratories" available to the other investigative agencies.

"As we see it," Celebrezze said, there are now five separate investigations of the Sheppard murder going on—the coroner, prosecutor, sheriff, Bay Village police, and Dr. Alan Moritz of Western Reserve. There seems to be lack of any central authority which we think the inquiry needs."

The mayor said he regrets that his offer to have Cleveland police "take over" the case was turned down, even though acceptance might have raised the question of the possibility of a taxpayer's suit or a critical report by the state auditor.