

INTERVIEW WITH MURPHY MARTIN

Police Chief Adams, of
Lewisville, Tex.

Sept. 3, 1969

- Martin: Controversy surrounding Lewisville Police Chief Ralph Adams came to a head today. Chief Adams has been criticized for his handling of the Texas International Pop Festival last week end. Chief Adams was also Chief Security officer for that festival. It is said that he refused to arrest narcotics users for fear of converting the grounds into a battlefield. Rumors circulating say that he intends to resign. Chief Adams is with us in the studio tonight....Chief Adams, have you resigned as Police Chief in Lewisville?
- Adams: Yes sir, I have, but the resignation was coming long before the Festival. I tendered my resignation as of the 25th day of August.
- Martin: That was prior to the Festival getting under way?
- Adams: Yes sir, it was.
- Martin: You tendered that to whom?
- Adams: To the City Manager. He advised me to hold my letter, to reconsider, and maybe I'd like to stay on as Chief of Police.
- Martin: In other words, you tendered it, they refused to accept it. Did you consider yourself staying on remaining, or were you still intending to resign on X date?
- Adams: I was still intending to resign on X date.
- Martin: What date was that to be?
- Adams: 8th of September.
- Martin: The 8th of September. Do you still consider yourself to be the Police Chief of Lewisville, until the 8th of September?

- Adams: Yes sir, until the 8th day of September, I shall remain as Chief of Police.
- Martin: Chief Adams, there is no question....I am sure that this is not news to you....you have been critized in many ways for the way you allowed things to take place there. What do you have to say about it.....what took place in your city?
- Adams: Well Murphy, I didn't allow anything....let's put it this way. You take 85,000 people. You take a security force of 115 men. You go into....I did not condone and I never will condone, the use of narcotics openly. But you go into the camp grounds, you start making wholesale arrests right and left and you are going to have a riot on your hands, in spite of everything you can do. Same thing on the skinney-dipping out at the lake. They say, "alright, let's get rid of the skinney-dipping"....fine.....how you going to do it? You go start arresting them and you are going to have yourself a riot. I did not have enough men....the minute I did get enough men to show force, you'd have a riot.
- Martin: Alright, did you think this in advance and if so, why Chief did you not take the necessary steps to have enough men from other law enforcement agencies there in order to enforce the law?
- Adams: To do this, you would have to practically call out the National Guard, the Highway Patrol and let me put it this way....everything is the same way as before the Festival came to our town.
- Adams: You were quoted, mounting the platform the last night of this Festival and giving the peace sign and saying to these youngsters that "you are fine...the trouble has come from outsiders and that you are welcome back here any time you want to...the town is yours". Were those quotes correct...did you say this and if so, was that truely your feeling?
- Adams: Yes sir. I felt this way about it. You are going to have a bt of narcotics users true. All of the people that I came in contact with, you can't say that "you, you and you are narcotics users." Every so-called "long hair" that I came in contact with was very polite, showed courtesy in every respect. These people I wouldn't mind having back in town. Now you speak about outsiders. Let me go a little bit into this on our traffic problem there around the lake. We had the Labor Day Weekend,

and we had campers coming in. We had the Festival there. We had the people camping. The people that crowded the roads...the common ordinary every-day people wearing suits like you and myself was going down to see the "skinney-dipping odd-balls" as one lady told me. Where I put the people who were camping was in an isolated area. One site was back by the dam, the other in open water...to get to it you went down one road. Doing this I thought I might avoid the people going down there and gawking. Come to find out that this is not true. Starting...beginning of it the traffic began to pile up on Friday before the Festival. People arriving about a week before. I was called out and I put my uniform on and went out and started directing traffic. Some of the obcenities, some of the things were done to my officers and myself by the so-called "good people"...there were curses thrown at us...one of my officers was actually hit and spun around by a car, busting through. He told him to stop and he went on by him and turned him around. We got the person though. If the people would have stayed away from the park, we'd have had less trouble.

- Martin: Chief, are you sorry that you handled the situation the way that you handled it?
- Adams: Murphy, I am not. I would have handled it again, this very same way.
- Martin: One final question, Chief...you also served as Chief of Security proper. I assume this was a paid job. Was there conflict of interest in your being Chief of Police in Lewisville and your also being Chief of Security at the Festival?
- Adams: I think you will find out that...some people may construe it this way...but I was on vacation during this time.
- Martin: You were on vacation?
- Adams: Yes sir, I was.
- Martin: From your job as Police Chief?
- Adams: From my...right.... but I still took care of my job in the City...I did not shun my job as being their Chief.
- Martin: The fact that you were on the payroll of the Festival itself....did that enter into any of your decisions the way you handled it?

Adams:

Not at all! I thought of the people of Lewisville, their safety and all....and let me say it again.... if I had taken action of making wholesale arrests like some people wanted me to do, the merchants might not have been able to open their shops this morning, some of the people might be sweeping up glass in the street and they might be making funeral arrangements. It was my decision, I didn't like the narcotics, and I still don't like them, and we still made as many arrests as possibly could.

Martin:

We've been talking with Chief of Police, Ralph Adams of Lewisville, Texas, Chief of Police until the 8th day of September when he will resign.
