

Stabbing Case 'Bungling' Prompts Police Top Brass Shift

By WILLIAM E. ANDERSON

Police bungling of several important investigations — including the murder of a 18-year-old newspaper carrier — resulted in shifts of 15 high departmental officials, Police Chief Winston L. Churchill conceded yesterday.

The sweeping changes in top brass were announced by Churchill as he talked of "red (warning) flags" raised by police handling of recent investigations and reported in The Indianapolis Star.

The major reshuffling came in the Investigation Division, as predicted last month by the Star.

Meanwhile, investigators yesterday — 11 days after the newspaper carrier's abduction and slaying — began a house-to-house search of the neighborhood where the carrier, Jerry M. (Mike) Bayles, was abducted Oct. 3.

FOR THE first time, detectives began showing area residents copies of a police artist's sketch of the killer, based on a witness' description.

In another move to step up the investigation of the murder, Deputy Police Chief Ralph F. Lumpkin assigned six more detectives to the case full-time.

Lumpkin, who survived yesterday's shake-up and will remain at the helm of the Investigation Division, had assigned only three detectives full-time to the case until yesterday.

Lumpkin's move brings to 15 detectives—including six from State Police—the number assigned to full-time investigation of the Bayles case.

THE ADDED manpower came at the request of State Police Captain Robert K. Gray, who is heading the probe of the newsboy's murder, Lumpkin said.

Gray said the house-to-house search for clues would be in an area bounded by Washington Street on the north, the Penn Central tracks on the south, Warman Avenue on the east and Eagle Creek on the west.

About 360 families and proprietors and employees of about 100 businesses will be questioned, Gray said.

Detectives early yesterday found a knife on the roof of the Indiana National Bank branch at 201 West Washington Street, but stains at first believed to be blood proved to be rust.

LUMPKIN said the knife

was discounted as the murder weapon, although the bank branch is at Harris Avenue, where Mike had been delivering papers before the abduction.

Gray said investigators have learned that four men committed to Central State Hospital and known to have been sex offenders were on hospital furloughs at the time of the Bayles slaying.

The four men will be questioned today about the case, Gray said.

The boy's body was found in a lonely field in Henry County, several hours after he was abducted.

In explaining the departmental changes, effective today, Churchill said:

"We are not being as sharp as we should be."

Churchill pointed to:

1. The "clumsy and slow start" in the Bayles probe.

2. The suspension and indictment of Sgt. Vernon D. Pullings, accused of aiding in a prisoner's escape from the Marion County Jail.

3. The steering of two reporters for The Star to a gambling place by a driver for Speedway Cab Company and the subsequent investigation of the firm's president, Dayton L. Keeton and the resignation of the city's commissioner of taxi licenses.

4. The disappearance from the Central Records, or Identification, Branch of records on Keeton.

CHURCHILL said the investigation of the Bayles case, since its inept start, "has, in my estimation, been good."

The shifts announced yesterday in the Investigation Division included:

1. Capt. Sheldon L. Laskey from head of the juvenile branch to head of Central Records and Capt. Edward W. Clouse from head of the Homicide and Robbery Branch to head of the Juvenile Branch.

Churchill said Clouse, who was on vacation when the Bayles case broke, was being shifted to strengthen the juvenile branch, which he had headed previously.

The "big consideration" was to strengthen Central Records, which had been headed by Capt. Kenneth E. Luke, who was transferred to the Burglary and Larceny Branch, Churchill said.

2. Capt. Raymond A. Koers, head of the Burglary and Larceny Branch, to head of the Homicide and Robbery Branch.

3. Lt. Patrick E. Uberta, who was acting head of the Homicide and Robbery Branch during Capt. Clouse's vacation, was transferred to the Burglary and Larceny Branch. Lt. Joseph G. McAtee of the Operations Division will take over from Uberta.

4. Major William E. Pond from the Personnel Branch to second in command of the Investigation Division, replacing Major Beaufred D. Marcy. Marcy traded assignments with Pond.

5. Lt. James H. Seellenberger from special investigations to the "center detail," putting him in charge of downtown investigations including burglary

and shoplifting. Seellenberger traded assignments with Lt. Chauncey D. Witter.

6. Capt. James R. Langford, head of the Finance Branch, was promoted to acting major and will remain at his financial post.

7. Lt. Chester H. Sanders of the Investigation Division will replace Lt. McAtee as field

lieutenant in the Operations Division.

8. Sgt. Kirby S. Crawley will move from the Narcotics Branch to the Operations Division; Sgt. Louis N. Tandy from special investigations to field investigations, and Sgt. Edward Marvum from the Homicide and Robbery Branch to special investigations.



Marcy Clouse Koers Laskey Pond Langford Luke