

Capt. Petersen Discharged From Oakland Police Force

REINSTATEMENT OF 6 HOURS ENDS WITH DISMISSAL

Commissioner Morse Accuses Inspector on 4 Counts of Misconduct

ACCUSATIONS ARE DENIED

Dismissed Officer Declares He Will Carry Fight to Highest Courts

OAKLAND, September 11.—Basine his order on four charges and citing twenty-one specific instances to back up these charges, Commissioner of Public Health and Safety F. F. Morse dismissed Captain of Inspectors Walter J. Petersen shortly after 10 o'clock this morning after that officer had served but six hours since his reinstatement.

Immediately after receiving the charges Captain Petersen denied each and every one of them and at the same time stated that he would be a candidate for the office of Commissioner of Public Health and Safety at the election next spring. Captain Petersen also filed an appeal with the Civil Service Board before leaving his office.

I am through with the Police Department for good.

I will hand in my resignation within fifteen days, nevertheless, that will not prevent me from fighting the charges Commissioner Morse has preferred against me. They are, every one of them, untrue.

PETERSEN'S STATEMENT

Captain Petersen issued the following statement regarding his dismissal:

The statements made by Commissioner Morse are in toto a lot of untruthful lies. Morse is not striving to remove me from the Police Department because of alleged acts committed in violation of the rules of the department, but because I will not be a part and parcel of his political ambitions.

Morse has offered me the post of Chief of Police through other parties and in particular through Walter D. Cole, president of the Chamber of Commerce, and through Joseph E. Cain, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, on March 16, three days before my dismissal, when at a conference Morse said, "If you want to make Peter-

sen Chief of Police, I will name him." This offer was also made to another official of the city and a leader in the county government.

I have never been a candidate for the position of Chief of Police under Commissioner Morse nor do I ever intend to be.

HONESTY IS NO ASSET

The Commissioner is not trying to clean up the Police Department by keeping me out of the force. On numerous occasions men of his own political coterie have violated rules and regulations of the Police Department, which have been passed up without a reprimand. It is needless to say that the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety is in the hands of H. L. Hagan, the city attorney, who dictates to the commissioners at his will. Honesty and competency have never been considered by Morse and Hagan.

During my twenty-five years in the Police Department my honesty and integrity have never been questioned. I have had the indorsement of every Superior Judge, every District Attorney and every city official. Before the present administration my honesty has never been questioned—until the advent of Jackson and his successor, Morse.

I shall fight these charges through every court in the land, if necessary, I will show Morse to be the hypocrite he is, with neither honesty, competency or decency. I have been the goat for certain political factions in the Police Department, which expect to gain by my dismissal. I shall fight Commissioner Morse in the courts and in the forum by being a candidate for Commissioner of Public Health and Safety in the next election.

MISCONDUCT CHARGED

The charges on which Petersen was dismissed alleges misconduct in office, failure to perform the duties of office and failure to observe rules and regulations of the Police Department appertaining to said office. Responsibility for the disappearance of property, receipt of gratuities, permitting gambling, friendship with crooks and gamblers, public acts and statements unbecoming to a police officer and the employment of press agents are among the charges cited.

Morse's full charges against Petersen are:

Walter J. Petersen—That Mr. Petersen was hereby discharged and removed from the office of Captain of Inspectors of the Police Department of the city of Oakland for each and all of the following reasons, to-wit: (a) Misconduct in and of office; (b) incompetency to perform the duties of said office; (c) failure to perform the duties of said office; (d) failure to observe the rules and regulations of the Police Department pertaining to said office.

Said discharge and removal is based upon each and all of the following particular grounds, to-wit:

That you are responsible for the disappearance of certain property consisting of certain dress from the Police Department of the city of Oakland.

That you are responsible for the disappearance of property consisting of certain guns and pistols from the Police Department of the City of Oakland.

PROPERTY IS HIDDEN

That you are responsible for concealing property belonging to private persons in private inlets in the office of Captain of Inspectors in the City of Oakland and for withholding to return the same to the owners thereof.

That you have received presents and gratuities from various persons in violation of the law and the rules of the Police Department of the city of Oakland.

That you have agreed to furnish intoxicating liquors to various persons in violation of the law and the rules of the Police Department of the City of Oakland.

That on numerous occasions you have permitted and connived to allow houses to be conducted in the City of Oakland in violation of law and the rules of the Police Department of the City of Oakland.

That you have wilfully and deliberately refused to disclose facts and testimony which your personal knowledge when called as a witness in criminal proceedings pertaining to alleged police graft and corruption, and have sought to dodge responsibility for your former acts, statements by the means reply, "I don't remember it, but that was" and by your similar evasive replies.

That during the year 1919 you did attempt, on numerous occasions, to obtain from Officer Charles Lightgate a falsly written confession of alleged police graft and corruption in the city of Oakland, although you were repeatedly told by said officer that he had no personal knowledge of any such graft or corruption.

That on several occasions you did improperly, unlawfully and in violation of the rules of the Police Department obtain Submarine A. Station,

who was engaged in the regular performance of his police duty.

HINDERED OFFICER

That you did on numerous occasions in the year 1919 hinder and obstruct Officer Vernon C. Thompson in the performance of his regular police duty in violation of law and the rules of the Police Department.

That you are now, and for some time past have been, illegally and unlawfully performing the duties of and acting as captain of inspectors in the Police Department, notwithstanding that you are not and have not been in civil service in the city of Oakland since September 8, 1917.

That you are now, and for some time past have been, illegally and unlawfully performing the duties of and acting as captain of inspectors in the Police Department in the city of Oakland, notwithstanding your removal from said position on March 12, 1920, by the City Council of the city of Oakland.

That you undertook to prevent the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety from hearing charges of alleged graft and corruption stated by you to exist in the Police Department of the city of Oakland.

That you did on numerous occasions make, for publication in local newspapers, false statements of alleged graft and corruption existing in the Police Department of the city of Oakland.

That you have, on numerous occasions, brought the name of the Police Department and the city of Oakland into disrepute and disgrace by making unfounded and false statements of alleged graft and corruption in the Police Department in the city of Oakland.

That you have undertaken to interfere with and obstruct the administration of the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety by personal operations and through legal organizations.

FRIENDLY TO GAMBLERS

That you have maintained such intimacy and friendship with gamblers and crooks as to render you unfit for the performance of police duty in the Police Department in the city of Oakland.

That your public statements and acts in relation to Berlin and polyanth have been such as to render you unfit to serve in the capacity of police officer in the Police Department in the city of Oakland.

That you have on numerous occasions participated in political activities contrary to law and the provisions of the city charter and the rules of the Police Department.

That you have recruited certain newspaper reporters and known as press agents, to spread rumors and statements concerning you and your proposed activities.

That you have done and committed numerous other acts of misconduct that render you unfit for performance of police duty in the city of Oakland.

This order of discharge shall be effective forthwith. Yours truly,

F. F. MORSE.