

Patterson vs. Murphy on staff

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson maintains he needs a bigger staff.

But County Executive Daniel T. Murphy seems adamant the county cannot afford any staff increases in the first six months of 1978.

It is a confrontation between the two most powerful Republican office holders in Oakland County.

Patterson and his chief assistant, Richard Thompson, have appeared before the board of commissioners, the Republican-controlled policy-making body at the county level, a number of times since last February. Little action has been taken, however.

Thompson, appearing before the board's personnel committee last week, said the prosecutor's office needs at least five new assistant prosecutors and two clerks. The county's probate court has also requested two new prosecutors to handle juvenile offenders.

IN A COMPROMISE, the personnel committee voted to allow the prosecutor to hire law school graduates as prosecutor-trainees directly instead of going through the time-consuming county civil service system.

Thompson said the move would help the prosecutor's office a little because it would enable it to fill vacant assistant prosecutor positions immediately. Prosecutor-trainees are able to move up to assistant prosecutor positions as



DANIEL T. MURPHY
"The same arguments"

soon as they pass the bar examination.

The committee, however, refused to take any other action. Instead, it asked the county personnel department to do a two-week audit of the prosecutor's office.

Thompson said the personnel department was out of its field in trying to evaluate the prosecutor's staff.

Earlier, Patterson had complained, "Since 1974, the regular workload of this office has increased anywhere from 20 per cent to 40 per cent, depending on the division of the office."

The numbers of criminal warrants issued has increased from 7,230 in 1972 to 8,696 in 1974 to 12,033 in 1975 and has remained at that level since.

"However, since 1974 we have not had any additional personnel."

Thompson called the latest postponement of action "a nice way of stalling us."

"WE'VE ALREADY been told by the county executive," Thompson said, "that there would be no additions. He controls the personnel department. You don't think they're going to come back with a report that's different from what Murphy wants?"

In his annual "State of the County" address Murphy said, "Every manager and director came to you (the board of commissioners) not 45 days ago. To have them come back to you and go over the same arguments (for additional staffing) is not in the best interest of the taxpayers."

Thompson said that in the wake of Murphy's statement, James P. Dunlap, head of the personnel department, had told Patterson additions would be forthcoming.

THOMPSON accused Murphy and the board's Republican members of playing "petty politics" in blocking the addition of what he said are much-needed staff members.

Commissioner Robert Gorsline (R-Milford) said Thompson's arguments were "a new tactic that we haven't seen too often."



L. BROOKS PATTERSON
The same requests

"He's trying to play martyr to get what one wants from the board of commissioners."

Thompson, however, countered saying, "Republicans are taking their marching orders from Murphy. I don't know why it's happening, but we didn't get any support from the Republicans on the board."

Patterson and Thompson await the outcome of the personnel department's limited evaluation and are expected to be back before the board's personnel committee next week.

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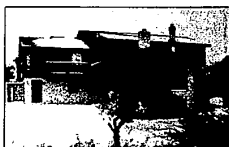
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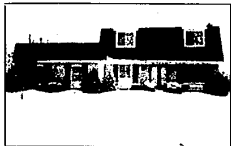
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