

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

January 18, 1940.

Retiring Attorney General Frank Murphy made the following statement today:

As I leave the office of Attorney General of the United States, I feel it my duty to clear up certain misstatements of fact, and insinuations and implications based upon such misstatements which have today and lately been circulated in a portion of the press.

Such misstatements are to the effect, or insinuate, that as Attorney General I have, for political purposes, suppressed possible proceedings against Mayor Kelley of Chicago, Mayor Hague of Jersey City, and other political leaders, and that my successor in office, Mr. Robert H. Jackson, is expected to continue the same policy of suppression and inaction, to serve alleged political purposes of the Administration.

Such stories and such statements are not true - I resent them and the implications arising from them.

Proceedings, by grand jury and otherwise, have been pressed against political leaders, without regard to their party, their power or their influence, for the violation of Federal laws whenever the Department has been able to obtain evidence to justify prosecution. There has been no criminal prosecution of the persons above referred to because there is no evidence in the Department to warrant such prosecution.

The Department has no authority to investigate or prosecute the investigation of any laws other than Federal laws.

The Department has been vigorous in ferreting out violations of Federal law without regard to political implications. There is not the slightest basis to suspect any change in the Department's policy of firm and equal enforcement of the laws.