

Spina tells how he hopes to keep riots out of Newark

How the Newark Police Department is planning to cement relations between the colored community and that branch of the government to prevent the types of riots which have affected other northern cities was outlined in a radio interview by Director Dominick Spina with Commentor Bernice Bass over station WADO Sunday evening.

On the program known as "Community Corner" Mr. Spina when queried about the incidents which transpire to keep a well publicized rally just that—a rally, spoke of the concern evidenced by leaders in the colored community and their pledge to him of non-violence. Coming as it did in the wake of the Harlem and Brooklyn turmoil the Director said it was a most heartening experience.

Declaring that he was opposed to the establishment of a police review board on the ground that it would demoralize the department he vouchsafed the opinion that there was already enough machinery — municipal, state and federal to correct any abuse citizens might suffer at the hands of the police.

He also stated that, in his opinion, such a review board would not necessarily accomplish the desired results. He pointed out that there now exists many avenues through which ordinary citizens can seek redress from real, or alleged grievances.

In addition to the Inspection Division, which is an investigative arm of the Police Department, a citizen can register a complaint through the Magistrate's Court and if satisfactory action is not obtained there, can always go to the Prosecutor's office.

DIRECTOR SPINA emphasized that the State Attorney General's office, as well as the FBI, also would investigate any charges brought against the police department; as would the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.

The Director denied that police brutality now exists in Newark. He flatly declared that verbal or physical abuse on the part of any police officer simply would not be tolerated.

He outlined some of the methods instituted since he

assumed office to combat such practices.

He also stressed that allegations against a member of the police department, whether the charge was simply conduct unbecoming an officer or running the gamut from verbal to physical abuse, were thoroughly checked out and a report made to the complainant covering the results of the investigation and the remedial action taken, if warranted.

THE DIRECTOR also expressed his opposition to vigilante groups set up to combat area crime. His opposition stems from the fact that these people are not trained in good observation nor human relations.

He was concerned that when a member of a vigilante group saw what appeared to him to be a crime and attempted to interfere, he could end up getting hurt or killed.

The Police Director felt that individuals so inclined would be of better service as members of the Civil Defense Auxiliary Police where they would receive proper training.

In addition, they would be issued uniforms and gain recognition as law enforcement agents and preclude the kind of arguments that could ensue between other civilians and members of vigilante groups.

He mentioned his recent plea for one hundred auxiliary police. These uniformed men are deployed in various patrolling missions. It has been found that often the sight of a uniformed patrol serves as a deterrent to a prospective criminal.

Director Spina also expressed amazement at the demands of many leaders for colored cops to be brought back into colored areas.

Obviously perturbed by this turn of events, the Director reminded the audience that at the outset of his administration he had pledged that there would be no discrimination in the police department. Therefore, despite the sentiment of some colored civil rights leaders, no colored policemen have been transferred from their present duty in white areas.