

NAACP probing beating report

A rash of police brutality charges which have been occurring with mounting frequency over the past several weeks have caused the local branch of the NAACP to issue a citywide call for witnesses to give depositions concerning what they know about the circumstances involved.

The most serious case brought to the attention of the organization was that of Ben Bryant, a murder suspect who died in City Hospital last week, after two weeks in the detention ward where he was being held under guard for court action.

The Rev. Boyd B. Cantrell, president of the NAACP, revealed that he has taken a number of depositions from relatives and neighbors who charge that the man's death was due to a brutal beating he received while in police custody in an effort to force a confession from him in the death of Edward H. Johnson who was found dead after several days in his Rutgers' St. notions store.

BELIEVED DEAD from natural causes when his body was discovered behind a counter in his establishment, an autopsy revealed that he had been stabbed to death with a single puncture in the heart with an ice pick which had been imperceptible at first glance.

Neighbors recalled hearing Bryant and Harding engaged in a heated argument about the time the slaying occurred, and another resident of the area led police to the place where Bryant was alleged to have thrown an ice pick. The weapon was recovered by police and Bryant was placed

under arrest for questioning.

THE NAACP probe was

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Frontiers withdraw from race

The New Frontiers party officially withdrew its slate from the coming election campaign when George C. Richardson, former assemblyman, announced that he would not stand for the U.S. Senate as standard bearer and would throw his weight behind President Lyndon B. Johnson to help defeat Senator Goldwater.

In his statement of withdrawal Richardson said in part:

"I am painfully concerned that the life-giving gains achieved by colored people and other minority groups in America, today, are threatened with virtual extinction. These gains have been hard-earned during recent years. The threat of their extinction is posed by the rise of the far right, evidenced by the impending nomination of Senator Barry Goldwater as the Republican candidate for President.

THE WORKING MAN,

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NAACP probe

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touched off by Mrs. Leola Bryant, mother of the dead man, accompanied by the Rev. and Mrs. A. Wright, residents of the area who claimed that Bryant was in perfect health when he was picked up at his home and carried to the precinct for investigation.

The next day Mrs. Bryant told the NAACP she was summoned to the hospital where she found her son a mass of bruises and in serious condition. He died two weeks later.

The case was placed in the hands of NAACP attorneys and formal charges will be presented to both Mayor Adinizio and Police Director Dominic Spina for official action.

THE SECOND case brought to the attention of the NAACP was that of Leroy King, 41, of 307 Avon Ave. who was shot while allegedly attempting to escape from officers who attempted to question him in connection with a traffic violation.

The charges were filed with the NAACP by Mrs. Maryann King, wife of the wounded man who claims that she and her husband had been constantly harassed by policemen in the neighborhood because of their interracial union. The shooting, she claims she was struck by two other difficulties they had experienced with the law.

This case will also be presented to city officials for investigation. Unless some immediate steps are taken to bring Newark's "trigger and club happy" police under control it is feared that the colored community will be the scene of uncontrolled violence as colored citizens will seek some means of protecting themselves from abuse.

ALSO UNDER investigation by the NAACP is the case of Mrs. Eula Truitt, of 69 Springfield Ave., who claims she was assaulted in a police precinct while preferring charges against other offenders in her home. She claims she was stuck by two policemen, one white and one colored, for allegedly contradicting an officer.

Considerable resentment has been stirred up by conflicting reports about the case of William Euwin, a detective connected with the prosecutor's office who was allegedly pistol whipped by several city policemen during a dispute outside of a local night club. This case was referred to the grand jury

IN THE meantime, other civil rights groups have become involved in the brutality controversy.

The Essex County chapter of Americans for Democratic Action has recommended that an independent study be made of the proposal for a centralized police headquarters in Newark.

At its recent board meeting, the unit also criticized what it termed "reckless" language used by Police Director Spina in announcing a "get tough" policy by Newark police.

The chapter noted that Spina's reasons for proposing the centralized headquarters, which he expressed before the County ADA last month, were "persuasive" and merited further consideration. The chapter resolution states that an independent study by acknowledged experts in the field would weigh factors other than "economy and efficiency" which Spina stressed.

IN OUTLINING his proposal before ADA, Spina had maintained that a centralized headquarters would enable the understaffed department to make better use of its existing manpower through greater use of its motor vehicles and modern com-



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munications facilities.

In its second resolution, the ADA board referred to statements made by Spina last week following reports of assaults on policemen.

While deploring these assaults, the board reminded Spina, in a letter, that police - community relations was a two - way street and that "reckless" announcements by the director of a toughening of police practice could only lead to further bitterness and rancor.

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