

Psychological handcuff

For the first time there was a public exposition by both sides of the pros and cons of the controversial proposal for the creation of a police advisory board that would investigate charges of police mistreatment of citizens.

After the long hearing conducted by the Newark Human Rights Commission, these facts seem clearly established:

- There are adequate avenues of redress for anyone who is the victim of police brutality. These are in the courts, the prosecutor's office, the mayor, the Human Rights Commission and the FBI. The establishment of a police advisory board would be just another appendage, one without the power of legal authority.

- No pattern of police brutality was revealed by the proponents of the advisory board.

It would seem, on the basis of statements at the hearing, that little purpose would be served by the creation of the board. It would, on the other hand, subject the enforcement agency to subtle pressures that would be harmful to the department's efficiency. It would, in effect, be a psychological handcuff on our police officers.