

# Toward Better Understanding

## Police Precinct Councils Formed to 'Fill a Void'

6/26/63

By JOHN L. DOTSON JR.

The first two of Newark's police precinct councils were organized last night to "fill a void" of understanding between the police department and the city's resi-

dents and to promote the police "image."

Mayor Addonizio, Police Director Dominick A. Spina and a number of other police officials were on hand to welcome and to outline

the responsibilities to the residents who will serve on the councils of the Third and Fifth precincts.

About 15 persons attended the organization meeting in the Third

Precinct and 20 were greeted at the Fifth. They are to meet monthly.

The precinct councils, according to Spina, represent the first attempt in the country to organize liaison groups on such a local level. Councils will be formed in the First and Second precincts tomorrow and in the Fourth Precinct Monday.

### Rules Out Review Board

"There has been a lot of racial tension and stammering for a police review board," Spina declared, "but we feel that is not the need. There is a void between the police and public and these groups will fill it."

Spina said the trouble seemed to be that "you do not know the problems of the police department and we do not know your problems." He said it would be the precinct councils' jobs to inform both sides of any complaints they might have against each other.

"The administration is trying so hard to cure the ills of this city," Addonizio declared. He said many matters that cause trouble between police and the residents could be rectified by contact.

However, Addonizio said, "We are not asking you to be police officers."

The mayor and Police Chief August J. Rauscher expressed concern about how residents viewed police. "It seems we are not getting through to the public," Rauscher told the groups.

The councils are to tell citizens that the police are their friends, Addonizio said. He said he believed the city would be a better place if the precinct councils do their jobs.