

Police Take Lumps

Fifth Estate Collective

1968

Is Detroit Police Commissioner Johannes Spreen serious about trying to alter the brutal, racist and corrupt nature of the force he commands?

Some think he is.

He ordered the suspension on Nov. 13 of nine policemen in the unprovoked beating of several black teen-agers after a dance given by the Detroit Pig Officers Association (DPOA) at the Veterans Memorial Building. The youth were attending a church dance.

Subsequently two of the suspended nine officers were criminally charged for their part in the beatings which assistant prosecutor, James H. Brickley, termed "unprovoked."

Spreen has finally released, as a result of pressure from the Mayor's Commission on Community Relations (CCR), the report on police behavior at the Poor People's March where Detroit Police attacked the marchers at Cobo Hall. As a result of the report he has suspended two officers.

Spreen, at the direction of Mayor Cavanagh, has ordered that police recruiting be done on a basis of one black officer to every white one in an attempt to integrate the most segregated police force of any large city.

The CCR is demanding an investigation of the Wallace demonstration brutality, but nothing has been heard from Spreen to date,

In the Vets Building beatings warrants were brought against Patrolman Leo T. Haidys, Jr., 9603 Beaverland, for felonious assault and Richard Stinson for assault and battery. (It is interesting to note that both Detroit dailies repeatedly gave the addresses of the victims and not the ones of the accused criminals as is the usual case. We were able to find Haidys' address, but not that of Stinson. Some people feel that as many as 1/3 of Detroit policemen live illegally outside of the city.)

Haidys is charged with pistol-whipping James Evans with his revolver as a mob of eight cops attacked the youth. Shouldn't call them pigs, right? Stinson is accused of beating another youth.

The assistant prosecutor Brickley said there was "uncontroverted evidences" to show that a number of off-duty policemen attending the dance threatened the teen-agers with guns and a gun was fired during the melee. The two charged officers were the only ones the victims could identify of the gangs that assaulted them.

He further said the attack was unprovoked and there was no evidence that policemen's wives had been abused or insulted by the youths. He said the police had been drinking.

When a car belonging to the youth Stinson is accused of assaulting was returned from the auto pound where the police had brought it, it was covered with Wallace for President stickers.

When the two pigs accused of the beatings came into court guess who was there to go their bond and provide them with a lawyer? The good old DPOA.. The same group that is defending the three pigs who executed three black youths at the Algiers Motel in the July 1967 Rebellion.

This newspaper is willing to wager any sum with anyone that none of these thugs and murderers posing as guardians of law and order ever spend one day in jail for their crimes. Any takers?

Reaction to what appears to be an administrative and public outcry against police malpractice has been predictable.

The racist *Detroit News* gave page three coverage to charges by the mother of Patrolman Stinson that her poor boy had not attacked anyone but had in fact been the victim himself of a beating by “vicious teen-agers.”

The worst came from Carl Parsell, head of the DPOA and who really runs the Detroit police, who said, “Charges of police brutality are part of a nefarious plot by those who would like our form of government overthrown.”

Don’t get upset, Carl; we’re not as bad as all that. All we want is the Crime Syndicate, known as the Detroit Police, overthrown and replaced with a force that will really protect all of the people.

We might even let you work on it if you promised not to use words like “nefarious” while you were walking your beat.

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Fifth Estate #67, November 28-December 11, 1968

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