

Demands Action on Brutality

The Detroit Branch NAACP this week charged that brutality cases against Negro citizens now pending have met a "stone wall of indifference" and predicted that a failure of responsibility by the Police Commissioner could have "tragic results for the city."

The Rev. James Wadsworth, president of the Detroit Branch NAACP, in a report to the community on police-community relations, said police brutality without effective redress leads to frustration and "frustration coupled with decades of injustice is the ingredient poured into the Molotov cocktail of violence.

"The Detroit Police Department, under the leadership of Commissioner Ray Girardin is concocting the ingredient of this bitter drink."

Continuing his statement, the Rev. Mr. Wadsworth said, "The NAACP is fully aware of the fact that the riots of Harlem, Rochester and Philadelphia injured the cause of civil rights. Vandals, thieves and looters are not a part of the civil rights movement.

"Invariably these lawless elements are put into action by the anti-civil rights actions of that handful of sadistic officers who disgrace their uniforms.

"The brutality cases now pending here, have met a stone wall of indifference and worse within the police department. The NAACP is now processing three of these cases.

"In the Rembert - Tyson case Mrs. Ruth Rembert, Donna Tyson, Eugene B. Ty-

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son, Joseph Tyson and Leonard Tyson were tried and convicted of assault against police officers.

The uninjured police officers inflicted the following damage on these people: Mrs. Rembert suffered a broken wrist; Eugene B. Tyson suffered a broken hand; Leonard Tyson received numerous bruises and lost a front tooth, and Joseph Tyson, whose arm was in a sling, had the stitches torn from his healing wound by the pummeling officers.

"Leo Smith, another victim, called for police help as a result of problems with his 16-year-old son. When the police handcuffed and beat the boy on the public street, his father was also attacked when he tried to shield his son with his body. No arrests were made at the time.

"Mr. Smith then filed a complaint with the police and got almost immediate action. He was arrested for assault and battery against a police officer.

"Barbara Jackson, with a record for accosting and soliciting, was beaten on the head with a flashlight. Then her hands were cuffed behind her back and she was thrown to the floor by a police officer who kicked her in the spine and pushed her face into the concrete, breaking one tooth and loosening another.

Her face was then smashed into a brick door frame and was horribly disfigured from this inhuman abuse. She was released without charges.

"She was taken directly to Commissioner Girardin and the Mayor's Administrative Assistant, Mr. Romanoff, by the NAACP branch president, Mr. Wadsworth, the Rev. Charles Morton, Bruce A Miller, chairman of the Legal Redress Committee and Eugene Plowden, branch administrative assistant.

"We demanded and were promised she would not be molested. In spite of that promise two detectives arrested her the following Tuesday, held her from 10:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. incommunicado, questioned her in relays and attempted to coerce her into saying others than police officers had beaten her.

"It is time our Police Commissioner stopped protecting those officers who disgrace him, their uniforms and the department. The function of the police department is to protect the public and not the police.

"Reports of the Community Relations Bureau of the Department should be made directly to the Commissioner and be open to public scrutiny and review.

"Finally, the Commissioner should have the courage to enforce discipline and respect for law and order within the police department.