

# City of Detroit

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48231

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*Complaints*

JOHANNES F. SPREEN  
*Commissioner*

March 20, 1969

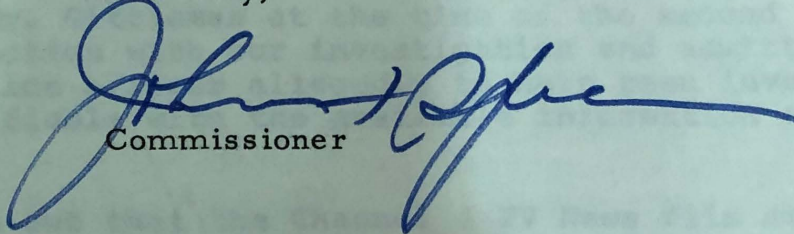
The Honorable Jerome P. Cavanagh  
Mayor of Detroit  
City-County Building  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

MAR 26 1969  
MAYOR'S OFFICE

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Enclosed are the departmental reports into the complaints you received from Mr. Jack Nater, 14200 Cloverdale, and Mr. Robert Gittleman, 2400 David Stott Building. Both complaints emanated from the Wallace Rally on October 29, 1968.

Sincerely,



Commissioner

JFS:mn  
Enclosure



# DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

## INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date February 5, 1969

To: Commissioner

Subject: INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY OF ALLEGATIONS OF POLICE BRUTALITY BROUGHT BY MR. ROBERT GITTLEMAN AT A POLITICAL RALLY ON 10-29-68.

Mr. Gittleman alleges he was severely beaten, kicked, stomped, stepped on and clubbed by no less than six Detroit police officers and further alleges that most of the officers assembled had any means of formal identification in that there were no badges or precinct identification numerals.

On two separate dates the complainant was interviewed by this writer regarding this matter. Gittleman received treatment at Providence Hospital, Southfield, Michigan, for a one inch laceration of his scalp and a one-half inch laceration to his left leg, contusions to both elbows and right hip. He was x-rayed, treated and released.

On the first date, Mr. Gittleman reviewed 400 photographs which included the entire detail assigned to the Wallace rally. He was unable to make identification of his alleged assailants. On the second date, Gittleman was afforded the opportunity of viewing Channel 4 TV News film and was unable to substantiate any Detroit police officer engaged in an assault upon his person. The only police activity Gittleman could positively ascertain that involved him was actions by the Wayne County Road Patrol officers. Mr. Gittleman at the time of the second interview indicated his satisfaction with our investigation and admitted the identity of any Detroit police officer allegedly to have been involved in his complaint to be unidentifiable with the available information and pictures.

It is to be pointed out that the Channel 4 TV News film on the Pontchartrain Hotel terrace at the head of the steps, he first is noted in a prone position and some Detroit police officers did pass him, none of whom struck any blows. The involvement of the Wayne County Road Patrol officers shows them bringing him to his feet and sending him on his way.

The allegation regarding the removal of badges, while exaggerated, is partially true as we have documentary evidence of a minority of officers without badges.

Due to the lack of documentary evidence of any officer engaged in an assault on Mr. Gittleman, combined with his inability to identify any police officer, we are unable to sustain his complaint.

APPROVED

FEB 6 1969

Thomas Lusk  
CHIEF INSPECTOR

Gordon R. Smith  
Gordon Smith  
District Inspector  
Western District



# DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

## INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date February 7, 1969

To: Deputy Superintendent

Subject: INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY REGARDING THE ALLEGATIONS OF MR. JACK NATER CONCERNING ALLEGED POLICE BRUTALITY TO HIS SON, GARY, 17, ON THE EVENING OF 10-29-68. (CONCLUSION)

Complainant alleges his son Gary was severely beaten by five (5) police officers necessitating hospital treatment.

Investigation reveals Gary Nater was admitted to Detroit General Hospital (Main) and subsequently taken from that hospital to Providence Hospital, Southfield, Michigan, by his father. He was examined for a laceration to the scalp and contusion of the left wrist. He was x-rayed. Skull proved negative, left thumb fractured. The left thumb was splinted, scalp sutured, and he was released.

At an interview with Gary Nater and his father, the youth alleged the police charging into the crowd of demonstrators shouting to the top of their voices, running over people and knocking them down and struck them with their night sticks. That he was forced to jump from the 12' wall of the Pontchartrain Hotel and upon landing to the sidewalk below, injured his ankle. That while he was at Detroit General Hospital an officer, holding a cloth to his eye, swore and kicked at him.

Nater was afforded the opportunity of viewing 400 mug shots of Detroit police officers in an attempt to identify his alleged assailant. He refused to avail himself of this opportunity to identify any of his alleged assailants. He insisted that a Negro officer was nearby at the time of the incident and was allowed to look at all photographs of Negro officers assigned to this detail. He failed to identify any one.

We have information from a firefighter, Edward Kuhnlein, who was assigned that night to guard Fire Department property and observed the actions of persons assembled in the area. He related to us the story of a youth who we believe to be Gary Nater. This youth jumped from the wall of his own volition and limped away from the scene. This youth had been part of a group of active demonstrators who had been hurling crushed rock and other missiles from the terrace of the Pontchartrain Hotel at police officers and other persons assembled on the street below. This same youth was observed to return to the area later in the evening and join another group of demonstrators, actively engaged in the harassment of police officers. The youth was subsequently struck by an unidentified police officer when this group refused to leave the area.

We have observed TV News reel film of Nater lying in the doorway of the Fire Department covered with a blanket of clothing supplied by other demonstrators.



Nater as both relate this incident related by firefighter Kuhnlein  
foreign made sports car occupied by two (2) females.

Nater's allegations of profane utterances and an attempt to  
kick him while at the Detroit General Hospital by a Detroit police  
officer would relate to Patrolman Robert Spooner, Badge #2955, of the  
Tactical Mobile Unit. Patrolman Spooner had previously been sprayed in  
the face with an irritant causing severe pain and temporary blindness.  
In questioning Patrolman Spooner, he does not recall participating in  
any action of this type. He likewise does not believe he was walking  
about the hospital. Patrolman Spooner does not make any attempt to  
emphatically deny the allegation as he states he was in a great deal of  
pain at this particular time, being completely blind in one eye and having  
very little vision in the other eye. He further states that if he were  
the officer involved, he would be only too glad to render an apology to  
Nater.

This complainant is unable to identify facially/by badge  
number any Detroit police officer. He likewise refuses to avail himself  
the opportunity of looking at mug shots in an effort to identify his  
alleged assailant. With the lack of cooperation on the part of the  
complainant and the inability of firefighter Kuhnlein to identify the  
officer, there is no way that we can satisfy this complaint. From the  
information given us by firefighter Kuhnlein it did appear the officer  
who struck Nater did so in the course of police duty when Nater refused  
to leave the area upon police orders.

With the available information I am unable to identify the  
alleged assailant and therefore cannot sustain the complaint.

*Gordon Smith*  
Gordon Smith  
District Inspector  
Western District

**APPROVED**

FEB 11 1969

*Thomas J. Kelly*  
CHIEF INSPECTOR

**APPROVED**

FEB 11 1969

**SUPERINTENDENT**

**APPROVED**

FEB 11 1969  
*Charles A. Spula*  
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT