

In Indianapolis

Negro Press Seeks Witnesses to Cops Beating 2 Muslims

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — The headline in this city's most influential Negro weekly newspaper, the Indianapolis Recorder, read:

CHARGE WHITE COPS BRUTALLY BEAT TWO BLACK MUSLIMS HERE

Thus, in a fiery front-page story, the black press called on its readers to "report any individual who saw policemen beating two members of the Muslims while handcuffed."

Behind the support given to the fight against police



KUYKENDALL resentment against police brutality against unarmed black victims, which has swept like a rising tide throughout Indianapolis.

However, the sadistic kicking and beating inflicted on Roy Davis and Gaddis Berry by police officers served to bring all segments of the Negro community closer together in protest, since the police here already are under fire, charged with mounting a "campaign of harassment" against Negroes in the guise of a so-called "crackdown on vice."

Davis and Berry were represented at the first hearing by Atty. Rufus C. Kuykendall, a city councilman, who said he had received numerous telephone calls from residents in the area at the time, telling him that policemen were "beating two Ne-

groes while they were handcuffed."

The Recorder said its switchboard had received "scores of complaints from citizens, already irked by reports of unnecessary police harassment and brutality ... charging that the two men were beaten and kicked by police officers although handcuffed and lying on the sidewalk."

Free on \$450 bonds each, Davis and Berry will be brought to trial on March 23. Attorney Kuykendall announced he will make a general defense against police brutality, because the case of the Muslims is only one of a growing number of such cases here.

The Indianapolis Social Action Council, headed by Rev. Andrew J. Brown, has called for a thorough investigation of complaints against the police department.

Meantime, the city's two Negro city councilmen, Kuykendall and Rev. James Cummings, joined Mrs. Virginia Davis of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Atty. Patrick Chavis, Democratic candidate for

state senator, in protesting the "storm-trooper tactics" of the police.

"I want to tell (Police Chief) Noel Jones one thing: We've had enough Bull Connors in Birmingham and we don't need another one here," Chavis said.

Davis, a barber, and Berry, a cement finisher, were selling copies of Muhammad Speaks in front of a supermarket when the manager called the police, charging the men were preventing customers from entering the store.

Rev. O'Neal Shyne, prominent minister of Emmanuel CME Church here, said he did not see the beginning of the incident, but that he did witness "15 or 20" policemen on the scene and that four or five of the officers were beating and kicking the handcuffed men. The pastor, who said he would be willing to testify to what he had seen, asserted an officer shoved



Roy Davis



Gaddis Berry

Mute testimony to police brutality in Indianapolis him, warning:

"Don't stop here or the same thing will happen to you."

The Recorder said one of their reporters "talked to the Muslims. He was told that they were beaten about the face and groins with black-jacks while they were handcuffed."

Davis and Berry "also said that white passing motorists got out of their cars and aided in the beating."

The first two policemen on the scene told a different story, claiming that one of the Muslim men struck an officer first.

Davis and Berry told the Recorder that "you will know the whole story after March 23."

In the meantime, Mayor John J. Barton refused the request of the ISAC that a

special commission look into the complaints of police harassment of Negro citizens, indicating that an investigation by the Board of Public Safety would be sufficient.

Reverend Brown, leader of the ISAC, said "we recommend a commission to investigate the police department because we feel that the police department could not investigate itself and come up with a true picture."

Reverend Brown also said that his organization did not want to interfere with an honest, impartial drive on vice, but wanted "arrests and entrance into people's homes made on perfectly legal grounds."

The next move is for Attorney Kuykendall to take the complaints of police brutality to U.S. District Attorney Richard Stein.

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