

NW Detroiters Talk To Senate

Crime Hearing Gets Unruly

By DWIGHT JARRELL Staff Writer

"The never ended in my life, but in last summer's riot they were shooting at my husband. If he must die, give him something to die for with honor."

This was the emotional plea of a young, intense Detroit policeman's wife who was among 24 persons testifying last week before the Michigan Senate's Crime Investigating Committee holding its first public hearing in the state.

More than 500 persons filled Carpenters Union Local 982's hall at 22521 Grand River Tuesday night where the special senatorial crime body listened to individual testimony centering on crime in the streets which, in the words of committee member Sen. George W. Kuhn, of West Bloomfield, "has turned Detroit into the crime capital of the world."

"Take the handcuffs off our police," said the Detroit police officer's wife, and the loud, and sometime unruly, crowded hall gave her testimony thunderous applause.

"WE ARE NOW getting down to the grassroots and talking to the people in the communities," State Sen. Raymond D. Dziedzic, D-Detroit, a member of the committee and sponsor of the resolution which set it up, told an Observer reporter.

"We're finding out the private citizen's thinking on crime in the street. And it is very emphatic," he said.

The committee, brought to life by the regular session of the State Legislature last year and given until next December to perform its task, has held four closed-door meetings with community leaders and law enforcement agencies in Detroit, Grand Rapids and Lansing.

Other public meetings, at which testimony of private citizens will be sought, are scheduled in the immediate future. The latter include a second hearing within two weeks in Detroit's inner city, followed by similar hearings on Detroit's east side, Flint, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Jackson.

CHAIRMAN OF the eight-member non-partisan investigating body in Jackson Republican Senator James G. Fleming, Other GOP senators, besides Kuhn, are Dearborn Heights' N. Lorraine Beebe and John F. Toop of Cadillac, Democratic, in addition to Dziedzic, are Detroit Senators Stanley F. Rozycki, Coleman Young and Arthur Cartwright, Young and Cartwright are the two Negroes on the committee, Senator Beebe is its only woman.

The committee started originally April 12, 1967, with six members and an appropriation of \$3,000. Senators Young and Beebe were added to it following the Detroit riots and at which time its budget was increased to \$10,000. Its chairman, Senator Fleming, former Jackson city prosecutor, estimated that expenses to date have run "about \$300 to \$400."

A preliminary report, made back to their Senate colleagues on the basis of their closed-door sessions, has resulted in several bills relative to crime and riots being introduced already in the session of the Legislature.

They include:

- A Molotov cocktail bomb law amendment which will remove the word "intent" from the law, difficult to prove in a court, and make mere possession a felony.
- A law regarding sniping, for which some legislators are advocating the death penalty.
- Mob control laws, in the words of Dziedzic, "with more teeth in them and giving police more power in dispersing



SEN. JAMES FLEMING

crowds."

- Laws granting the governor and mayors of cities more power to act in event of riots.
- Legislation to upgrade and provide additional riot training for police.
- More pay for police, by state subsidy if necessary.

THE COMMITTEE is expected to back momentarily, swinging its weight behind a bill of its own members, Kuhn's current controversial "stop and frisk" law of which is now in the legislative hopper and before the Senate's judiciary committee.

More than half of the crime body's members are reported favoring passage of such a law, according to Dziedzic who sponsored a similar bill defeated two years ago.

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The answer produced complete silence in the hall, suddenly so quiet the hum of a flickering fluorescent lamp overhead was audible.

Rozycki, disconcerted apparently, asked hurriedly, "I asked you have you been an eye-witness?"

"I was present when a friend of mine was killed in broad daylight," Tabor replied shortly.

Fleming later explained to an Observer reporter's question concerning the lack of the committee's exertions to maintain order:

"We did let the people be more expressive of their opinions than we would normally at a public hearing because we wanted to get the real feeling of the people and what they want and need."

TESTIMONY AND committee comments early turned to an indictment of the state's courts.

"The people," Dziedzic commented, "have an ever



SEN. RAYMOND DZEDZIC

growing concern not just about crime on the street but the type of justice handed out to criminals.

"Citizens feel that lawbreakers are merely being slapped on the wrists by the courts," he said.

"I sometimes wonder," he continued, "if it isn't the courts that need our attention the most. Perhaps we should read the riot act to our judges. An answer is the voice of the people at the polls when certain of these judges are running for reelection."

But even the crime body's own senators couldn't escape entirely the angry mood of one woman.

Said she, to Fleming: "We elected you to represent us and you can't do anything. But Hubbard (Mayor Orville Hubbard of Dearborn who recently had passed a Dearborn stop and frisk law) can. We need him for mayor of Detroit."

Dziedzic interposed: "We need another Mary Beck."

AT THE HEIGHT of the five-hour-long meeting, a committee member interrupted to call out the name of a resident present:

"Your real estate office has just been robbed," he said.



TOKEN OF APPRECIATION for their efforts in donating all food for the annual Madonna College benefit dinner-dance is presented to John Carlo (second from left) and Arthur Kobrynski (right), owners of the Thunderbird Inn, by Earl Demel, lay member of the Board of Trustees, and Mrs. Ira Kaufman, head of the college's Advisory Board. The affair attracted more than 250 with the entire proceeds going to the Madonna College Scholarship Fund.

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