

TIMES UNION JUN 10 1965

Abolish Police Advisory Board

Mayor Lamb says he is for retaining the Police Advisory Board because it has brought about "better understanding" in Rochester.

Really? It seems to us that it has split the community, that it has aggravated tensions instead of easing them.

The mayor also accuses Republican Councilman William A. Legg of "playing politics" in again attempting to abolish the board.

Who is really politically motivated? Is it the elected councilman who, by abolishing the board, would risk the wrath of the pressure groups that demanded it? Or is it the official who would appease such demands by creating and continuing the board?

A spokesman for a group favoring the board told City Council:

"As we head into another long, hot summer, the need becomes even more acute for an effective legal way for a citizen to seek redress when he feels mistreated, and it becomes equally important for a policeman to be able to clear himself of an unwarranted accusation."

There are many legal ways besides a review board for a citizen "to seek redress when he feels mistreated" by police. They are quicker. And they are effective IF city officials are willing to enforce police discipline on their own with-

out shucking off responsibility on an outside citizens' group.

As for a policeman being "able to clear himself of an unwarranted accusation," does the advisory board properly provide that opportunity when it does not guarantee a policeman the right to confront his accuser? In a recent case, the board even recommended disciplinary action without requiring the complainant to be present at its hearing.

The police board should be abolished. It has not accomplished its original purpose. And it puts all policemen under a constant cloud of suspicion at a time when they need maximum public support for effective law enforcement.