

# Police Advisory Board Should Be Abolished

The proposal by City Council Republicans to abolish the Police Advisory Board brings a vital community issue to a head.

The indictment against the board is clear:

It has failed to achieve the primary purposes it was intended to serve, and it has caused deep damage to community well-being.

The board was supposed to provide a nonviolent outlet for minority resentment of alleged police brutality. But the July riots occurred nonetheless.

Most critical is the erosion of law enforcement in many areas of the city, traceable directly to the reluctance of police to become involved in arrest incidents which might subject them to advisory board investigation.

The board has been condemned by the International Association of Chiefs of Police in a report on Rochester law enforcement otherwise praised by city officials. FBI

Chief J. Edgar Hoover has criticized review boards as detrimental to effective law enforcement. No major city has followed the leads of Philadelphia and Rochester in setting up such boards.

Abolition of the advisory board here would not mean that Rochester condones police brutality toward anyone.

Rather, it would require effective use of traditional disciplinary procedures to punish any policeman who misuses his powers (failure to follow these procedures was an important factor in the board's creation).

The advisory board threatens civilian second-guessing whenever police attempt arrests. It leads police to question community confidence in their work. It singles out police for special suspicion.

The time has come to give up the Police Advisory Board experiment. There is much to show that it has failed.