

## PANO Demands Retraction Of Judge Braniff's Remarks

The Patrolman's Association of New Orleans yesterday called on Criminal District Court Judge Matthew S. Braniff to publicly retract a courtroom remark about police brutality.

"Both law enforcement officers and other members of our judiciary were shocked and dismayed at these baseless allegations," the PANO statement said, referring to a remark Judge Braniff made in court when a Negro charged in connection with beating and robbery of a policeman said his teeth were kicked out by officers.

"Less than 48 hours ago I saw a film in which a judge of this court was brutalized by police," Judge Braniff replied. "If this can happen to a judge, God knows what can happen to a black man."

THE REFERENCE was to Criminal Court Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr., who was found innocent by Judge Braniff of charges stemming from a police vice raid at a New Orleans motel.

The PANO statement called Judge Braniff's remarks "very immature and rash," and claimed they were "proven to be baseless by the coroner's office examination."

The remarks "attempted to undermine the public trust in your department of police," PANO said.

The statement continued, "We of the PANO are of the opinion that Judge Braniff

should not have commented on an incident such as this without knowing the full facts involved. He is obviously basing his opinion on presumptions and personal prejudices. This should not be the conduct of a person holding this position.

"Furthermore, we do not feel that Judge Braniff's statements have contributed to the welfare of this community but rather have had the opposite effect."

The statement concluded with an appeal for "all citizens of this community to support

more rigid penalties for those who attack police officers and resist arrest."

## Haggerty Action

We are happy to see that the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana has asked for and received the file on the actions of Criminal District Court Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr.

As this newspaper has said before, Judge Haggerty's fitness to serve on the bench is in question. A determination should be made.

The commission was set up specifically to rule on the conduct of members of the judiciary. Its recommendations will go to the state Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has the power to remove a judge.

The commission is new to the scene, set up by the Legislature in 1968. Its involvement in the case of Judge Haggerty will be an important test for it and, as such, will be closely watched.

Judge Haggerty was found not guilty in court of charges stemming

from a police raid on a motel stag party.

Now the Judiciary Commission must determine if his conduct was in conflict with the Canons of Judicial Ethics.

A judge, more than any other professional, must set an example for society. His conduct should be beyond reproach.

The Canons of Judicial Ethics cover this point in no uncertain terms.

*"A judge's official conduct should be free from impropriety and the appearance of impropriety and his personal behavior, not only upon the bench and in the performance of judicial duties, but also in his everyday life should be beyond reproach."*

The Judiciary Commission of Louisiana must determine if Judge Haggerty's conduct has been beyond reproach.